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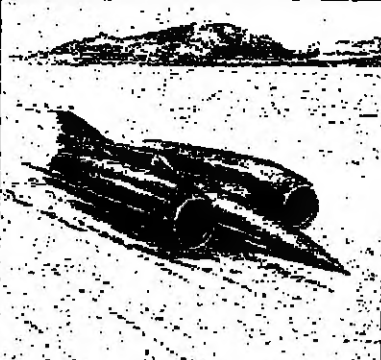
VOUCHER: page 2



**MAGAZINE**

In bed with the uninhibited Paul Merton

PLUS: Johnnie Cochran, O.J. Simpson's lawyer — and saviour?



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# THE TIMES

No. 65,182 SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 1995

## Single currency needs right terms

# Major warns EU could be torn apart

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

BRITAIN is to set new conditions for joining a European single currency beyond those in the Maastricht treaty, John Major announced last night.

At the same time he made plain that he is to resist the demands of the Euro-sceptics that he close off the option of joining a single currency, possibly as early as 1999.

Mr Major's delicate balancing act, designed to give the Conservative Party a policy around which it can unite in the run-up to the next general election, was outlined last night in a speech to the Thatcherite Conservative Way Forward group. His agenda, which he hopes will end the rift on his back benches, marks a substantial development in the Government's European policy.

The Prime Minister pleaded those on the right of his party with a warning that unless the economic conditions were right "a single currency would tear the European Union apart". And he disclosed that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, would use a speech next week to lay down new requirements to justify a single currency. Under the Maastricht treaty, strict financial conditions, including debt ratios and levels of inflation, have to be met. But in a move that will alarm Britain's partners in the EU, Mr Clarke is to propose that these should go further.

It is understood that the Government intends to suggest that broader economic conditions, including the flexibility of labour markets in different countries, will have to be met.

Mr Major repeated the

Government's line that sterling could not be part of a single currency in 1996 or 1997. "We don't believe anyone could sensibly want to go ahead then, but if they do we would not be with them."

Then, in a formula that is understood to have been agreed with Mr Clarke and Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, Mr Major went on: "Nor can we accept a pre-judgment about some unknown time in the future. The right for our Parliament to

### Ireland releases IRA prisoners

John Bruton, the Irish Prime Minister, urged Britain to consider releasing terrorists after Dublin freed five IRA prisoners. Tory backbenchers and Unionists denounced his remarks and the Government said that there would be no amnesty.

take the decision that it wants, when it wants, is undoubted. That lies in the future. To say 'yes' now or 'no' now is to operate on a hunch, not facts."

Mr Major's formula is a rebuff for the nine whipless Euro-rebels who have demanded as part of their own "manifesto" for returning to the party that a single currency be ruled out. It also pre-empted a campaign by senior right-wing Cabinet ministers such as Michael Portillo, Jonathan Aitken and Peter Lilley, who were planning to push Mr Major to give a pledge in the next election manifesto that Britain would

not join the single currency during the next Parliament. The compromise will be seen as an important concession to Mr Clarke and the Cabinet Euro-enthusiasts.

Other parts of Mr Major's speech to his Euro-sceptic audience were warmly welcomed. He gave a clear pledge that Britain would veto any moves at next year's conference on the future of Europe that would lead to a more centralised and interventionist EU. He promised: "Ambitious schemes for centralism will simply not get through. Britain for one will not accept them. Nor will electorates across Europe where a referendum would have to be held."

He said that Britain aimed for a more flexible EU. "A Europe of 15, possibly 20 around the turn of the century and more than 25 beyond that cannot be the same as a Europe of six. Talk of a fast track and a slow misses the point. We do not all have to do the same things at the same time in the same way and we shall resist pressure to do so. Unless Europe is flexible, it will simply grind to a halt."

In remarks that will delight the sceptics, Mr Major gave notice that he would be pressing for changes in EU voting systems to give the largest populations a larger say. There are strong indications that Britain will be seeking a reduction in the powers of the European Court. He also said that there should be fewer commissioners and "a more cost-conscious commission".

Simon Jenkins and Nicholas Budgen, page 16



Discovery lifting off from the Kennedy Space Center yesterday



Michael Foale and Eileen Collins

## Briton heads for spacewalk

By Nick Nuttall and Tom Rhodes

THE man who will become the first Briton to walk in space blasted off from Cape Canaveral in Florida yesterday amid fears that a sudden leak in one steering thruster could threaten the space shuttle Discovery's mission.

Dr Michael Foale, 38, an astrophysics graduate of Cambridge University, was last night about 200 miles above Earth closing in for a rendezvous with the Russian space station Mir. He is expected to leave the crew's quarters for his walk on Thursday. However, eight minutes after launch ground controllers discovered that two of the craft's 44 steering jets were leaking. It is thought the problem can be overcome by turning the leaking jet towards the sun to melt fuel that might prevent a valve closing.

Dr Foale, who lives in Houston, Texas, would have been the first Briton in space if the Challenger disaster of 1986 had not postponed shuttle missions. Instead, Helen Sharman earned that distinction on the Anglo-Soviet Juno mission to Mir in 1991.

The latest eight-day mission is also the first to have a woman at the controls — Lieutenant-Colonel Eileen Collins of the US Air Force. NASA — the American space administration — the European Space Agency and Russia hope to learn techniques that will allow them to build a space station.

**Inside the six-section Times today**

Simon Jenkins, columnist, on a triumph for Eurofanatics. Page 16

Paul Heiney, farmer, tries to take a leaf out of Thomas Hardy's books. Weekend, page 19

Anne Robinson, diarist, has a busy night with the literary set. Magazine, page 3

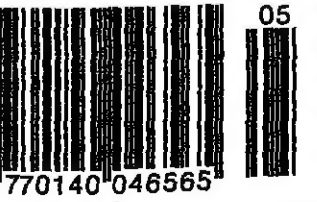
Matthew Bond, television critic, on the BBC version of The Buccaneers. Vision, page 5

Jonathan Meades, restaurant reviewer, samples lukewarm cooking in chilly Norfolk. Magazine, page 39

John Hopkins, sports writer, on Dean Richards and le crunch. Sport, page 38

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Births, marriages, deaths... 18  
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## Rugby touts sell seats for £700 a pair

By John Goodbody

TOUTS were yesterday demanding a record £700 a pair for tickets for this afternoon's England v France match at Twickenham which is expected to decide the winner of the Five Nations championship.

About 100 tickets have been stolen and the Rugby Football Union yesterday warned spectators not to buy from unauthorised sellers. The union has also increased efforts to stop tickets being resold by touts.

Richard Atkinson, the ticket office manager, said: "We are never pleased to hear about a black market, but the fact that the prices are so high indicates that tickets are scarce and that we have succeeded in reducing the flow from clubs and schools."

Match preview, page 40

## Jill Phipps's father held in veal protest

By Michael Hornsby and Philip Webster

MORE than 40 people were arrested yesterday at Coventry airport as the airlift of calves to the Continent resumed amid furious protests from animal rights activists. The father and sister of Jill Phipps, the woman who was crushed to death when she fell under the wheels of a lorry delivering calves to the airport, were among those arrested.

In the Commons a row erupted as a filibuster by Tory MPs prevented debate on a Bill banning the export of calves to countries where the animals are reared in ways that are outlawed in Britain.

At Coventry protesters broke through the airport perimeter fence and ran onto the runway apron in an attempt to stop a cargo aircraft carrying nearly 100 calves taking off for Amsterdam. The police said the protesters

## Labour stops widow bonus

Labour MPs, protesting about the failure of the Disabled Persons Bill, "shouted down" a private member's Bill to give widows a share in a £10 million bonus from the Lloyds Bank takeover of the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society. Page 21

## US sanctions on Chinese piracy

America will announce today trade sanctions against China for its failure to tackle the widespread piracy of films, software and music. The Clinton Administration signalled that it would impose 100 per cent tariffs on \$1 billion-worth of imports. Page 13

## Supersonic car

An RAF pilot is hoping to become the first person to drive a car at 850mph and break the sound barrier. Car 95 supplement

## Lawyer accuses peers of taking cash for questions

By Arthur Leathley, Political Correspondent

THE House of Lords was embroiled in the cash-for-questions controversy last night after a senior peer accused colleagues of taking "substantial sums" as payment for putting questions to ministers.

Four peers were accused of failing to declare cash payments and other benefits, breaching the code of "personal honour" which has existed in the Lords for centuries.

Lord Lester of Herne Hill, a Liberal Democrat peer and a human rights barrister, said that a commercial company had disclosed that it had given cash to peers and MPs but that they had not been declared. The allegations sparked calls for Lord Nolan's committee to investigate the public life to investigate the behaviour of peers as well as

to identify the peers but he would not.

He refused to discuss his memorandum to a committee investigating declaration of peers' interests. But Lord Marsh, member of the Lords sub-committee on declaration and registration of members' interests, said: "We do have villains in our midst."

The Commons was embroiled in the cash for questions controversy when Graham Riddick and David Tredinnick, Tory backbenchers, were accused of being prepared to accept £1,000 each to table questions. The allegations are being investigated.

Elliot Morley, a Labour front-bench spokesman, said: "The House of Lords is an even greater hot bed of vested interest than the House of Commons."



Lester: says peers broke code of personal honour

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Irish Premier says peace creates conditions where concessions are possible

# Bruton tells Major to think again on IRA prisoners

By NICHOLAS WATT  
AND PHILIP WEBSTER

THE Irish Prime Minister called on Britain yesterday to release its share of terrorist prisoners after Dublin freed five members of the IRA.

Tony Blair's backbenchers and Unionists immediately denounced John Bruton's remarks and the Government made clear that there would be no amnesty for terrorists held in Britain. The Northern Ireland Office said: "Those convicted in the courts must serve their sentence according to the law."

This was followed by further reassurance to the Unionists last night from John Major, who declared that that he would not be a "persuader" for a united Ireland. The Prime Minister used a speech to the rightwing Conservative Way Forward to try to calm Unionist fears raised by the disclosure by The Times this week of parts of the draft framework document on the future of the Province.

He promised that the people of Northern Ireland would not be forced out of the Union against their will. "They have a constitutional guarantee. For my part I cherish the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland's part in it. So I take the view that it is not for



Bruton: accused of folly

the Government to tell the people of Northern Ireland what their future should be. It is for the people of Northern Ireland to decide."

At Dublin's Forum for Peace and Reconciliation yesterday, Mr Bruton said it would be helpful if Britain reconsidered its policy. "It builds confidence when people see that the abandonment of violence brings rewards for families who are separated from their loved ones."

He defended the decision to release the five IRA prisoners yesterday. They included Pamela Kane, 30, the only woman IRA prisoner in the republic, who was convicted of

armed robbery and jailed for ten years in 1990. She was not due to be released until 1997.

Mr Bruton said: "These are people who have served the substantial bulk of their sentences. Obviously, the fact that we are now enjoying peace and there is no violence creates conditions where these things are possible."

Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, said he was appalled that Mr Bruton had allowed IRA terrorists out early to rejoin "their comrades in arms" and, even worse, that he had called on Britain to follow his folly.

In spite of the Government's assertion that it would not follow Mr Bruton's example, Michael Mates, a former Northern Ireland Security Minister, said he believed that terrorist prisoners serving life sentences would be freed early, if the ceasefire held. He made clear, however, that they were not political prisoners and could only be released by the judicial system.

At the top security Maze prison yesterday an IRA bomber was attacked by loyalist inmates. Sean Kelly, who has just begun a 25-year sentence for the Shankill Road fish shop bombing, needed stitches for head and face injuries.



Pamela Kane, an IRA member jailed for ten years in 1990. Yesterday she was freed as part of Mr Bruton's effort to build "confidence in the abandonment of violence"

## Birt attacks 'sneering, confrontational' interviewers

By ALEXANDRA FREAN  
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

Birt: "cool judgment" needed

THE media are turning political coverage into a "national soap opera" in which rational debate is drowned by "a cacophony of disputation", John Birt, Director-General of the BBC, said last night.

In an unusually brutal analysis of the role of his own organisation and its print and broadcasting rivals, Mr Birt criticised overbearing interviewers who "sneer disdainfully at their interviewees".

He added, however, that politicians were also responsible for the increasingly confrontational and sensational tone of reporting. "Some-

times the print media, broadcasting and Parliament all combine together and offer the spectacle of a feeding frenzy—a laith of indignation, fury and hyperbole—in which it is difficult to exercise cool and measured judgment," he told 300 politicians, media figures and business executives at Trinity College, Dublin, in the third annual lecture sponsored by Irish Independent Newspapers.

His comments may strike a chord with members of the public who have expressed concern over the tone of more assertive interviewers. But the speech is likely to raise the hackles of journalists inside and outside the corporation who feel that a tough line is necessary when questioning politi-

cians with sophisticated media skills. Many BBC journalists in particular believe that they have made strenuous efforts to be courteous since the BBC governors called for more polite interviewing 18 months ago.

John Humphrys, a presenter on Radio 4's Today programme, said last night: "Many politicians are highly trained in how not to answer questions. There is no doubt that listeners and viewers do want questions answered. Our job is to be persistent without being bullying."

A survey commissioned by the BBC last year found that audiences were far more concerned that interviewers were letting politicians get away with not giving full answers

than they were about questioners being discourteous.

Mr Birt's remarks about politicians alienating the public by using airtime "to indulge in sterile debate", may anger the political Establishment. Many MPs feel that the speed of mass communications and the demand for "soundbite" reactions often force them to make policy on the hoof or to fudge issues.

Mr Birt urged the news media to cover long-term as well as short-term issues and to provide background discussion. Journalists should also avoid giving more weight to personalities and rivalries than to policies.

John Birt's speech, page 16

## Bottomley ordered to appear in court

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

THE Health Secretary has been ordered to appear before a Crown Court judge to explain why there are no beds in a secure hospital for a woman described as a potential killer.

Virginia Bottomley has been sent a witness summons by Judge Thorpe to appear in court next Friday. The judge said it was "quite unacceptable" that the 24-year-old woman should have been held at Holloway Prison rather than taken to hospital where doctors could have assessed her condition.

Judge Thorpe issued the summons as Sharon Towes, of

Crawley, West Sussex, made her seventh court appearance since her arrest last April after stabbing Henry O'Kane, a council worker. She admitted malicious wounding.

Towes first appeared before Judge Thorpe on August 11. The judge remanded her in custody to Holloway and ordered that she be transferred to a psychiatric ward for reports. Although she made monthly court appearances, no bed was found.

Mrs Bottomley's office was warned on Wednesday that a summons would be issued if no bed was found.

The Lord Chancellor's Department said that if Mrs Bottomley had received a personal witness summons she was expected to appear in person. Failure to attend would be regarded as contempt of court. The Health Department said the summons had been received and was being studied by legal advisers.

**THE SUNDAY TIMES**  
**Little Lord Orson**  
by Simon Callow

With a pathetic drunk for a father and the pushiest woman in the world for a mother, Orson Welles had the parents from hell. And then there



was the strange Dr Bernstein who shared their life. Is it any wonder that they created the most monstrous child ever...?

Exclusive extract from a new biography. Only in The Sunday Times, tomorrow

## Penalised drivers may face re-test

Drivers who accumulate six penalty points within two years of passing their driving test would be forced to display L-plates again under a backbench Bill that received strong government support in the Commons yesterday (Jonathan Prynn writes).

Michael Clark, Conservative MP for Rochford, said his Road Traffic (New Drivers) Bill, given an unopposed Commons second reading, would clamp down on dangerous young drivers. Although the Bill would apply to any newly qualified driver it is aimed at mainly 17 to 21-year-olds, who are involved in 25 per cent of fatal road accidents, resulting in 1,000 deaths a year. Drivers who get six points within two years of passing their test would get their licence back only after retaking the test. A speeding offence is punishable by three to six points.

## Clegg claim 'was a lie'

A former civilian clerk in the Royal Ulster Constabulary who claimed to have seen a file on the case of paratrooper Private Lee Clegg marked "no prosecution", has admitted that she was lying. The RUC said yesterday that, after an investigation, the former employee said she had seen no such file and expressed regret for the trouble she had caused. Clegg was jailed for life in May 1993 for shooting Karen Reilly, 18, a passenger in a stolen car.

## Surgeon reinstated

Tahir Bhatti, the surgeon suspended after allowing a nurse to carry out part of an appendectomy at Trefiske Hospital, Truro, has been officially reinstated by Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust but allowed to keep his surgical registrar post. The nurse, Valerie Tomlinson, was earlier given a final written warning. The General Medical Council has still to decide whether to bring proceedings against Mr Bhatti for serious professional misconduct.

## Four-month ban for vet

A vet, banned from practising for four months for allowing two foreign assistants to vaccinate a cat that he was too busy to treat himself, says he faces business losses of £30,000. Both the juniors, one Dutch and the second Irish, employed by Robert Plenderleith, who runs four surgeries in North Lincolnshire, were qualified in their own countries but had not been registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in Britain.

## Indecency vicar jailed

A married vicar who admitted indecently assaulting boys aged 12 to 15 was jailed for two years at Chester yesterday. The Rev James Miller, 58, already had a conviction for gross indecency when he was appointed to his parish at Widnes, Cheshire. After yesterday's sentence the Right Rev David Sheppard, the Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, said the first offence had not involved children but added: "I regret very deeply indeed the damage done to the boys."

## Star Trek gains currency

A British company has struck a ten dollar Liberian coin with the two captains from Star Trek, James T. Kirk and Jean-Luc Picard, on the reverse. All profits from sales of the coin, made at the Pobjoy Mint in Sutton, Surrey, will go to Liberian charities. The release of the coin, which is legal tender in Liberia, has been timed to coincide with the British premiere of the seventh Star Trek film Star Trek Generations.

## Travel firm collapses

Medchoice Holidays, the tour company formerly called Yugours, ceased trading yesterday. Customers will be able to finish their holidays and those who have booked will get their money back. The Civil Aviation Authority said it had revoked the licence of the London-based company, which changed its operations when unrest broke out in Yugoslavia.

## Cambridge choice



Cambridge University has appointed Professor Sandra Dawson, left, to be director of the new £13 million Judge Institute of Management Studies from October. Professor Dawson, 43, who is married with three children, gained a first in history and sociology at Keele and spent 25 years at Imperial College London, where she became professor of organisational behaviour in 1990.

## Titmuss Sainer Dechert

A report (February 1) incorrectly stated that the law firm Titmuss Sainer Dechert was acting for the Maxwell brothers. The firm in fact has never acted for any defendant in connection with the pending proceedings and has not received any fees from the legal aid fund. We apologise for the mistake.

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EXP 11/50



Storms hinder rescue operation for two climbers split from their party

## Fears growing for women students lost on Ben Nevis

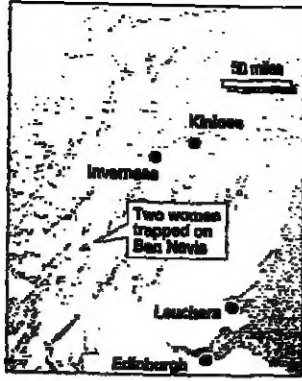
BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH  
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

TWO women students were spending a second night in driving snow on Ben Nevis after a rescue operation was called off when the weather deteriorated.

Iona Roden, 22, and Zoe Green, 20, who are experienced climbers, are members of a party of 15 from the University of Central Lancashire, Preston, who separated from their companions on Thursday to climb Glover's Chimney in the Tower Ridge area of the mountain. The other 13 young climbers walked off the mountain but as darkness fell the two had still not made it back.

At first it was hoped that the pair had spent Thursday night in the bothy at the top of the mountain. Rescuers trying to reach the hut were driven back several times by blinding snow storms and 70mph winds. When they got there it was found to be empty.

Last night Rhoda Roden, mother of Iona, said: "We are praying that she has managed to dig herself into a snow hole. But I really don't hold out much hope at all." Mrs Roden, said Iona, a fine art student, took up mountaineering nearly three years ago.



"She recently decided she would devote her life to mountaineering and rock-climbing. She adored the freedom and the beauty of the landscape."

"She met a lot of new friends and was determined to work professionally on the mountains. Kim knew all about the dangers and she had witnessed plenty of close shaves, but nothing was going to stop her. We can only hope she has been given the opportunity to use the survival skills she has learnt."

The family of Zoe Green, a first-year journalism student, set off for Scotland from their home in Sheffield. Her brother Peter was comforting his mother Lesley at her home in Sheffield. He said: "Zoe is an experienced climber, a climb

leader. I am sure she knows Ben Nevis well and she has been well trained in what to do in severe weather conditions."

A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth airlifted rescuers to the mountain early yesterday. Members of Lochaber mountain rescue team were joined by climbers from RAF Kinloss mountain rescue team and search and rescue dogs.

More than a hundred rescuers have been lined up for a full-scale search but there is concern about the ability of the two women to weather a second night.

Chief Inspector John MacFadzean said: "There is natural speculation that if they were fit and able, they would have tried to draw attention to themselves by now. But the fact that they did not have flares gives us a further glimmer that they may be trapped somewhere. It is too early to give up hope, but obviously as time passes, the chances of finding survivors reduces."

A spokesman for the university said the two students were members of the university's mountaineering team. "Both are experienced mountaineers, well equipped for winter climbing. They are more than capable of making the climb and are both well trained in survival techniques," he said.

## British bride dies on yacht voyage

BY ANDREW PIERCE

A BRITISH yachtsman who buried his wife at sea after drifting for two months in the Indian Ocean will be interviewed by police when he arrives in Australia today.

Ashok Baljoresai married his London-born wife, Pamela Thompson, a month before they set sail in his 30ft yacht *Dream Weaver*. He was rescued a week ago in the Indian Ocean by a Russian cargo ship.

Perth police have radioed ahead to the ship, *Anatoly Vasiliev*, and will be waiting at the quayside when she arrives today.

Mr Baljoresai said that he buried his wife at sea on January 12 after she died after stomach problems and dehydration. The couple, who were married in Singapore in September, were sailing back to their home in Mauritius after their honeymoon.

"I decided to bury my wife at sea because it was too distressing to keep her body on the yacht," he said. The voyage was expected to take a month but Mr Baljoresai said they were caught in a storm, the yacht's mast broke and they drifted for two months.

British consular officials will also be in Perth to meet Mr Baljoresai, 53, a former laboratory technician at Barking Hospital, east London. He moved to England in 1967 and returned to his native Mauritius in 1988 after the break-up of his first marriage.

NEXT WEEK  
IN THE TIMES

Win two seats for the Five Nations England v Scotland match at Twickenham in Times Sport, on Monday

Take a friend to a concert for 20p, on Tuesday



Designer style at high street prices on the fashion page, on Wednesday

Star Trek: Generations and other new films, on Thursday

The Valerie Grove interview, on Friday

## Sex club hostess convicted of blackmailing boy

BY ALAN HAMILTON

A SOHO sex club hostess who tried to charge a schoolboy £500 for a can of cola was found guilty of blackmail at the Old Bailey yesterday.

A jury took under two hours to return a unanimous verdict against Clair Malone, 20, who had threatened to tell the 16-year-old's parents where he had been unless he paid up. Mr Recorder Chadwin, QC, adjourned the case until February 28 and released Malone on bail, saying she could face a custodial offence.

The schoolboy, who lives with his parents in Kingston-upon-Thames, and cannot be named for legal reasons, was in Soho, prepared to spend £30 on his first blue movie, the court heard. Malone, had lured him into the club where she worked. The schoolboy was walking past the Erotica bar when she approached him and told him he could come in for £5.

The boy said in evidence that he expected to see a striptease or peep show, but after half an hour had seen nothing except Malone and another woman, who asked him if he wanted a drink. He ordered a cola and was told that it would cost £4.50. But Malone later produced a bill for £500, and told the boy he would have to pay. He was searched for money, and made to give his name, age and address.

Club staff took him to a local bank and forced him to withdraw money; the bank would give him a maximum of £114. Malone said that if he did not

pay the balance by the next Saturday, she would tell his parents where he had been.

The boy's mother subsequently discovered the £114 withdrawal from his bank account and took him to a local police station, where he confessed the full story. Police yesterday praised his courage in bringing the case to court, and disclosed that eight similar cases, involving 20 defendants, were pending.

Malone, of Piccadilly, who had denied blackmail, was told by the judge: "If you had been somewhat older, even in spite of your previous good character, I would have imposed a prison sentence on you. I have not decided yet whether it is possible to avoid sending you to prison."



Malone demanded that boy pay £500 for a cola

## Manager shot dead by shop robber

BY TIM JONES

A YOUNG supermarket manager was shot dead yesterday morning as he arrived to open his store.

David Beesley, 28, from Stockport, was found near the safe in his office at the Kwik Save store in West Didsbury, Manchester. He had a gunshot wound to the head.

Alan Foulkes, Kwik Save's divisional director, said the staff were devastated by the murder. Colleagues described Mr Beesley as "the best boss ever". Mr Foulkes said: "He had a very promising career in front of him. He was a good manager and well liked. It is a tragedy."

"Violence is an escalating problem that all retailers have to share. We have always taken measures against it and will continue to do so."

Police said the motive appeared to be robbery but could not confirm if anything had been stolen. Det Supt Bernard Rees said: "Somebody either entered the store with Mr Beesley or went in soon afterwards and shot him." He appealed for witnesses.

Mr Beesley had been due to attend a party today to celebrate his father's birthday. His brother John said: "David lived for his job. He also believed in what was right. Why was he killed like this? For a matter of a few pounds or for £20,000, does it matter? Is it worth a life?"

Police are investigating a possible link with a £12,000 armed robbery about a week ago in nearby Rusholme.

## Scots border hue and cry restored after 300 years

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

A LEGAL loophole that allowed English villains to escape the law by crossing the Scottish border was closed yesterday after almost 300 years.

In the past, police lost all their powers as soon as they crossed the border. The most that they could do was to make a citizen's arrest. But the loophole, which dated from the Treaty of Union in 1707, has been shut off under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Police in Scotland and England will now be able to pursue and arrest across the border.

Before 1707 wronged parties were allowed to cross the border in pursuit of their quarry. In 1563 an agreement drawn up between Scotland and England permitted "lawful trod with bound and horns, with hue and cry and all other manner of fresh pursuit" across the border.

There was, however, one slight obstacle. The pursuer

had to indicate his "open and honest" intention by carrying a burning turf on his lancepoint and he had to announce himself to the first person he encountered. The agreement was not included in the Treaty of Union.

In practice English police do not screech to a halt at the border and watch criminals disappear into the mists but they have had to rely on the help of their Scottish colleagues, and vice versa.

Inspector Frank Bewley of the Cumbria force, whose research led to the new powers being included in the Act, said: "There has always been very good cross-border co-operation but sometimes only on a wing and a prayer."

He says one high-profile armed chase that started in Lancashire involved three forces. Lancashire police initially followed the getaway car on the M6. Once on the A74, the car was tailed by the

Cumbria force. When it was clear the car was going across the border Dumfries and Galloway police were alerted.

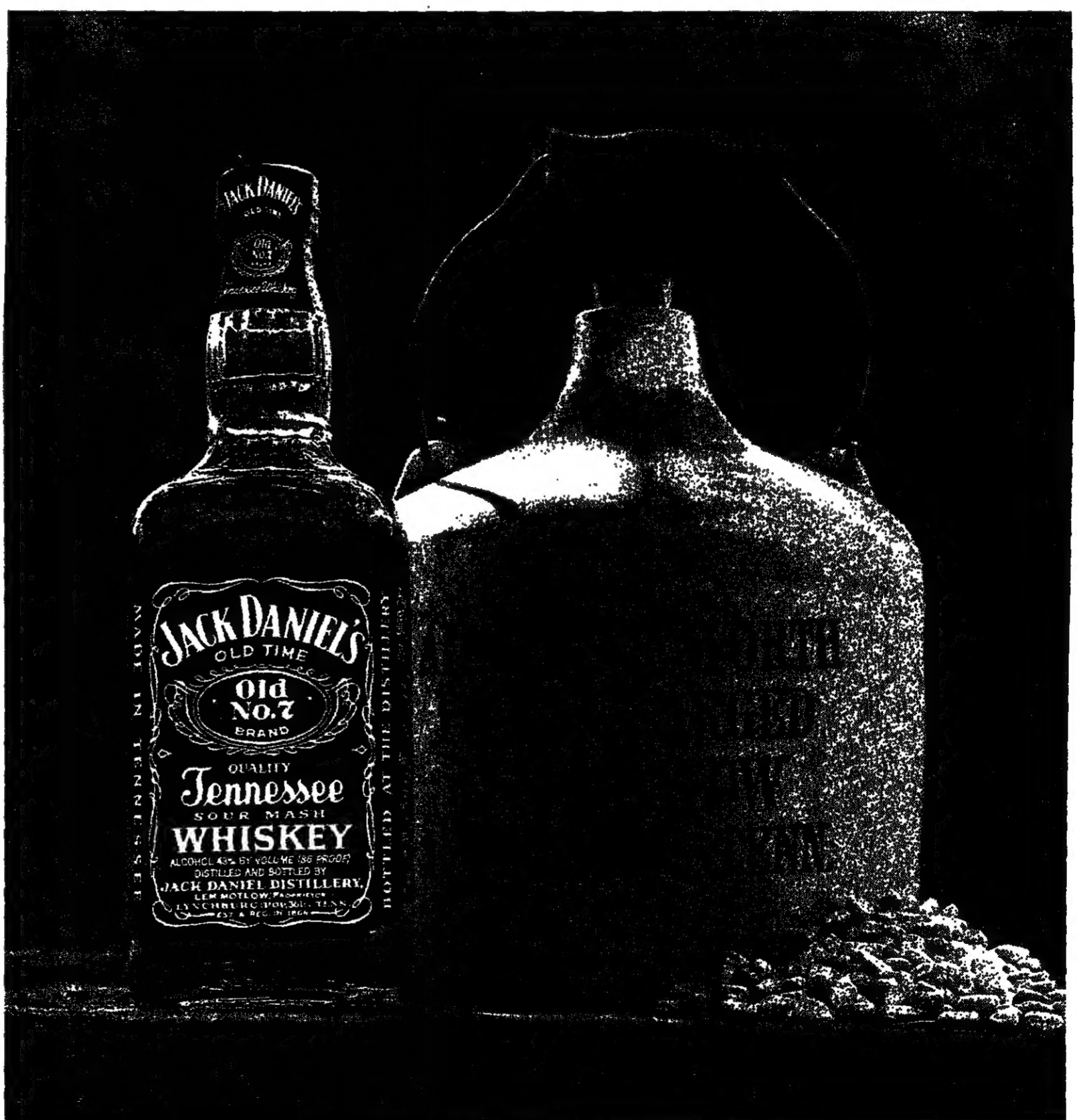
The armed criminals, who had been firing at police from the car, were eventually stopped near Lockerbie but police had to obtain a warrant from a JP in Lancashire before making the arrest.

The new Act will allow police officers in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to execute arrest warrants in each other's countries without obtaining permission from the local judiciary. It will also allow them to arrest and detain suspects in each other's countries and chief constables to call on cross-border forces for help in major operations.

In the aftermath of the Lockerbie disaster, officers from Cumbria spent over a week in Scotland helping Dumfries and Galloway police but they had no strict powers to gather evidence.



Zoe Green: she and Iona Roden, both described as experienced mountaineers, had separated from the rest of the student party to climb an area of Ben Nevis



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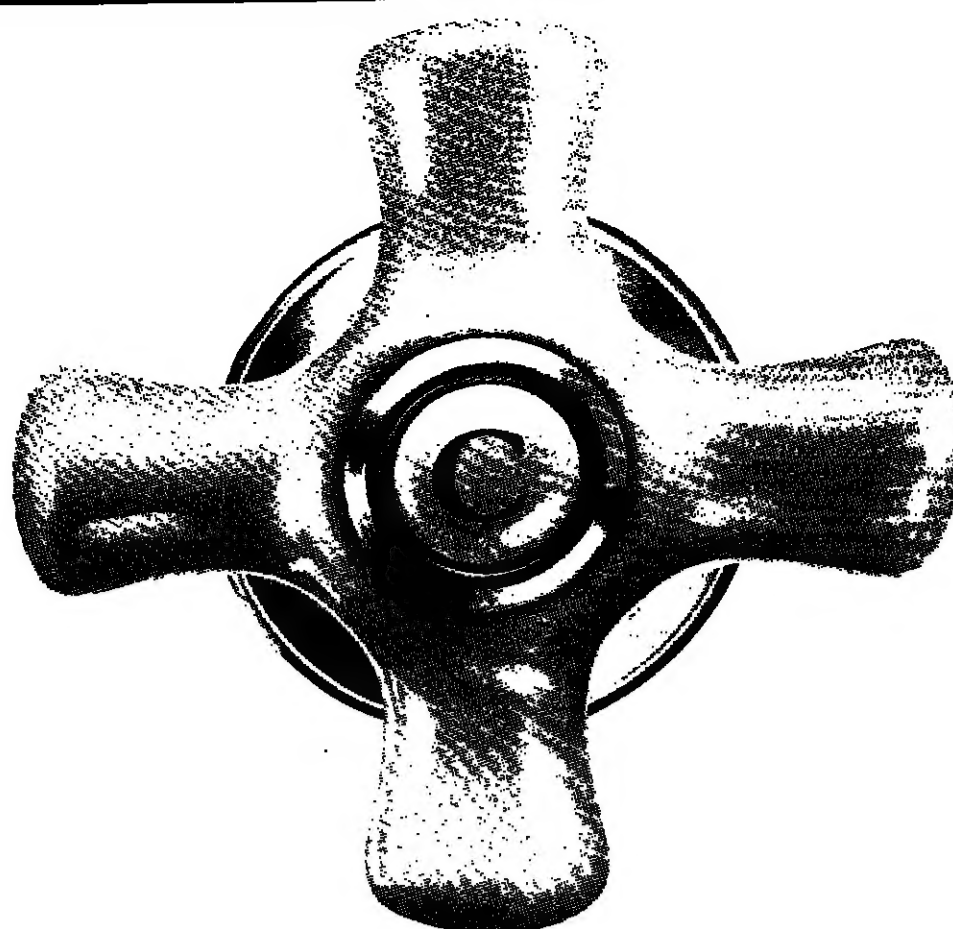
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Death of activist prompts violent protests across the country against export of live calves

# Father of crushed veal protester arrested at airport

By Emma Wilkins, Michael Hornsby and Philip Webster

THE father of Jill Phipps, the animal rights protester who died in a demonstration earlier this week, was arrested yesterday as he tried to prevent further exports of veal calves from Coventry airport.

Robert Phipps, 70, was one of several demonstrators who broke through a police cordon and ran onto the runway. The group was protesting against the reintroduction of flights, which were suspended on Wednesday after the death of Ms Phipps.

Mr Phipps was arrested just minutes after the inquest into his daughter's death was opened and adjourned at Coventry Magistrates' Court. The inquest was told that Ms Phipps, 31, the mother of a nine-year-old boy, died instantly when she was crushed beneath the wheels of a deliv-

ery lorry. David Sarginson, the coroner, said a post-mortem examination showed that her spine had been snapped. He gave the cause of death as severe crushing.

A fresh Commons attempt yesterday to curb the export trade in live calves was blocked amid furious protests and calls for the resignation of William Waldegrave, the Agriculture Minister. A Bill drawn up by Eric Marlow, Labour MP for Carlisle, to ban exports if animals were housed or fed in a manner that would be unlawful in Britain, was not reached as Conservatives made lengthy speeches on other measures.

As a private member's Bill it would have had no chance of becoming law without the Government's support. However, Labour MPs were an-

gered that the filibustering action of the Tories, who included Mr Waldegrave's parliamentary aide Oliver Heald, prevented a debate even starting on the Bill.

In Dyfed, county councillors rejected a request by the Farmers' Union of Wales to export calves from Haverfordwest airport after being told that up to £120,000 a day would have to be spent on providing police security.

The death of Ms Phipps, which is being investigated by the Police Complaints Authority, prompted several protests across the country. A group of 40 activists attacked the home of Christopher Barrett-Jolley, managing director of Phoenix Aviation, who is responsible for the commercial flights of veal calves from Coventry. Windows were smashed at



Justin Timson at Coventry airport yesterday where protesters, above, ran onto the runway in a vain attempt to stop a flight of calves



Mr Barrett-Jolley's home near Rugby. One officer was slightly injured when he tried to arrest one of the activists, many of whom wore scarves and balaclavas.

Justin Timson, 26, Ms Phipps's boyfriend, said after her inquest was adjourned yesterday that she would have approved of the protests. "She was all for violence against

property. The incident at Barrett-Jolley's house was a spontaneous outburst of violence. It gave him a message and he should take that message and stop the flights now."

More than 50 riot police were at Coventry airport for the arrival of the delivery lorry yesterday with 98 calves. About 25 protesters were at the gates, but many others had

gathered outside the magistrates' court in the city centre for the inquest.

Mr Phipps was arrested with seven other protesters who were trying to block the runway where a cargo plane loaded with the calves was awaiting take-off to Amsterdam. The flight was delayed for ten minutes as police cleared the runway. Helen

Lear, 28, a protester, said: "Bob was one of around 15 people who raced onto the runway but he was grabbed by two police officers."

"Bob has suffered terribly since Jill died. The whole family is heartbroken and this is the last thing they need. He was supposed to have open heart surgery on Tuesday, so this terrible trauma is hard-

ly going to help him."

Phoenix Aviation said it was aware that the decision to reintroduce flights so soon after Ms Phipps's death was controversial. "The company and its associates have now had time to consider the issues and have decided to continue flights," a spokesman said. "We hope that any protest will continue peacefully."



Police and protesters clashing yesterday

## Class warriors accused of infiltrating animal lobby

By Emma Wilkins

ANIMAL rights demonstrations at ports and airports are being infiltrated by violent militants intent on criminal activity, a senior police officer said yesterday.

Mick Brewer, acting Deputy Chief Constable of Warwickshire Police, said that peaceful protests at Coventry airport against the export of veal calves had been sabotaged by activists who had their own aims.

After the death of Jill Phipps, 31, who fell beneath the wheels of a delivery lorry at the airport on Wednesday, 40 hooded activists attacked the home of Christopher Barrett-Jolley, managing director of Phoenix Aviation, who is responsible for flying veal calves to the Continent.

"I think it is clear that we are seeing an influx of criminally-minded people who are operating off the back of a peaceful demonstration," Mr Brewer said. "After the tragic accident, our officers began to notice new faces in the crowd at the airport. Their technique is often to hide behind the peaceful demonstrators and egg them on."

Mr Brewer has discussed the policing of demonstrations with his opposite number at Devon and Cornwall Police. Violence has broken out at Plymouth docks. "I think we are being targeted by the same type of individuals," Mr Brewer said.

"It is a case of them taking what is a current issue and using it to go about their criminal business. We see them at hunts, at poll tax riots, at Criminal Justice Bill demonstrations. They are setting out to have a go at the Establishment."

"The situation now makes policing very difficult. We were dealing with peaceful protest but the situation has developed into hostile crowds — that's the way these people work," he said.

While activists were once content to liberate beagles from medical laboratories, recent years have seen incendiary devices in fur department stores and bomb attacks on scientists.

Since its foundation in 1972, the Animal Liberation Front has claimed responsibility for a number of violent attacks on supermarkets and individuals. An ALF booklet, first circulated five years ago, contains advice on how to make a complex timed incendiary device. The Animal Rights National Index



Barrett-Jolley: flight chief's house attacked

formed by police in 1986 under the control of Special Branch, recorded 3,073 crimes between 1990 and 1992 ranging from hunt sabotage to attacks on butchers' shops. Figures for the first eight months of 1994, recorded 585 incidents, mainly of criminal damage, which caused £54 million damage. There were 29 incendiary attacks over the same period.

Detectives believe the ALF is now closely linked with other groups, including Class War, which was involved in the Trafalgar Square poll tax riots in 1990.

Undercover police officers have infiltrated some units of activists. In 1991 an alleged plot to contaminate Laccosade was foiled when police acted before the bottles reached supermarket shelves. Smith-Kline Beecham, the manufacturer, said it had been a target because its drugs division involves experimentation on animals.

Boots the Chemist has been attacked several times. Security was stepped up in all branches after an arson attack on a Boots warehouse in Rochdale. In December 1993, three Boots branches were firebombed in Cornwall.

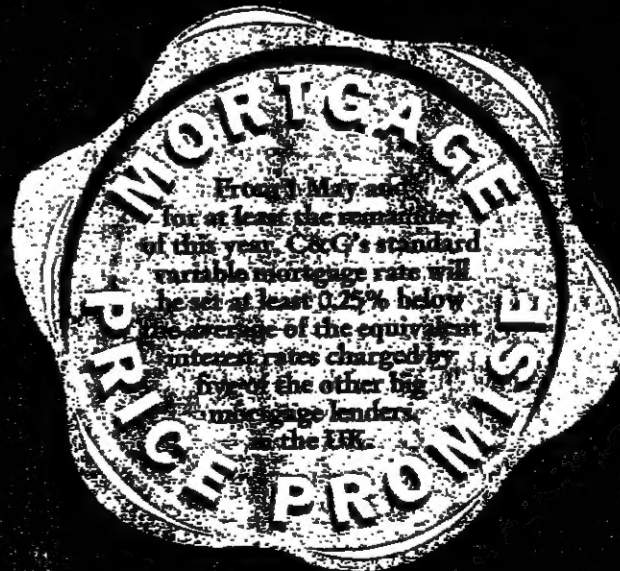
Department stores have also been attacked, with the most recent incidents being a series of fire bombings on the Isle of Wight. University research establishments have also been targets for animal rights activists, with attacks at Oxford, Surrey, and Edinburgh universities.

Last December, Keith Mann, 28, a leading ALF member, was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment. He admitted possessing explosive substances, attempted arson, criminal damage and incitement.

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# Pilots must pay £75,000 to learn size of award

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

TWO hundred former Dan-Air pilots, who last week won their case for wrongful dismissal, will have to pay another £75,000 in legal fees before they learn how much compensation they are entitled to receive.

Captain Delphine Gray-Fisk, who formed an action group and fought for more than two years to gain compensation from British Airways, said she was stunned when told of the new legal costs yesterday.

"We thought the whole thing had been wrapped up and that the final hearing would simply tell us how much compensation we would receive," she said. "But when we met our lawyers they gave us a written estimate asking for a further £75,000 just to pursue the case to its conclusion. Our members are far from wealthy and many have spent every penny they have in fighting this case."

"We just hope that we can convince the lawyers to accept payment after the compensation has been fixed, but we have to accept that it might not be the maximum of £10,000, even though we are pretty confident that it will."

The industrial tribunal has

the power to award up to £10,000 per claimant plus a further £5,000 if certain conditions are met. Their deliberations are held in three parts — the main hearing, an outline of the reasons for the decision and the settlement.

The pilots, who were sacked with redundancy payments averaging only £4,000 when BA took over Dan-Air, complained that they had been unfairly dismissed and that other staff had been treated far more generously.

The tribunal agreed and ruled completely in their favour. The settlement is due to be announced at the end of this month but first lawyers must make their presentations to the tribunal. "It seems they have to do a lot of preliminary work with discovery of documents and all kinds of other activities which, they say, will cost us £75,000 more," Captain Gray-Fisk said.

"We have already spent more than £300,000 on fighting the action and there is nothing left in the kitty. To get a little bit of justice is proving to be almost a financial impossibility."

The pilots are still planning to take BA to the High Court, where damages for breach of contract and wrongful dismissal could be limitless, but that action might cost £500,000. "The group is very determined. They have won the point of principle but I am sure that if they were able to do so they would vote to go on and try to win what they are convinced is their due, and that is re-instatement and re-employment," Captain Gray-Fisk said.

British Airways insists it will fight any action taken by the pilots in the High Court. "We have been trying to talk to the pilots in the action group for the last two years to try to settle their claim," a spokesman said. "These are the last people sticking out against what we are convinced is a reasonable settlement."



Gray-Fisk claimants "are far from wealthy"

## From battleship to bus pass: the seadog who stayed on past normal retiring age

### Navy's oldest sailor sheds sea boots after 47 years

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE oldest man in the Royal Navy, who joined up when the British fleet ruled the waves and flogging was still technically allowed, is finally leaving the service.

Chief Petty Officer Bill Price, 64, has been in the Navy for 47 years. He joined up in 1948 when the Navy had 107 principal warships and 150,000 officers and ratings, against 55 warships and 55,600 personnel today.

CPO Price, who will end his career in March on his 65th birthday, is the last sailor to benefit from a scheme allowing senior ratings to stay on until they were 65 years old. The old seadog, who lives in Portsmouth with his wife Lillian, said yesterday: "It's a far better service to join today. The food is terrific and it certainly wasn't when I

joined up. The welfare system is great and, of course, the money has gone up."

In 1948 the fleet had two battleships, four carriers, 16 cruisers, 34 destroyers, 25 frigates and 26 submarines. Today there are three carriers, 12 destroyers, 23 frigates and 17 submarines.

In practical terms, flogging of sailors was abolished in 1879 but was formally removed from the list of naval punishments in 1948. CPO Price has also seen the disappearance of the traditional lot of rum and of bell-bottoms. The biggest change was the Government's decision in 1990 to allow women to serve in warships.

He started his career at the Corsham naval training establishment in Wiltshire before serving in the battleship King George V. In the 1950s

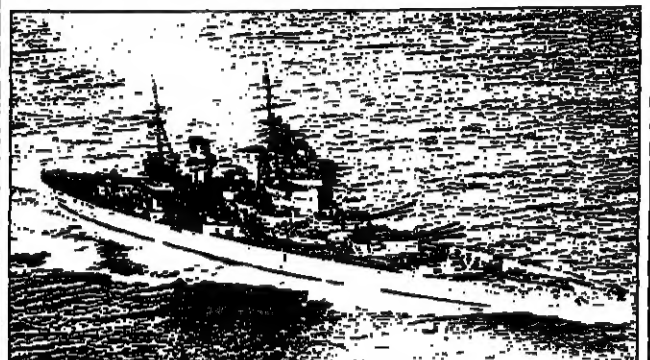
he was a leading hand on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier *Indomitable*. He later served in minesweepers and frigates before joining the aircraft carrier *Hermes*.

For the past 25 years, CPO Price has worked at the Portsmouth naval detention quarters. Now on leave before retirement, he said: "When I joined I had no idea I would be walking out all this time later as a pensioner. I feel proud that I have achieved a one-off."

After 22 years' service, which included the Suez campaign in 1956, he stayed on in the Navy under the so-called "promised men" scheme that allowed some senior ratings to remain serving until the age of 65. The scheme was later dropped and today most sailors leave at the age of 55.



Chief Petty Officer Bill Price, who will be 65 next month, and as he was in the battleship King George V, centre, when neither the money nor the food was up to much



## Women's jail 'turns shoplifters into addicts'

By LUCY BERRINGTON

WOMEN are entering Styal Prison as shoplifters and leaving as drug addicts, according to the Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Judge Stephen Tunim's report, to be published next week, criticises the lack of treatment and counselling for addicts. A BBC report said yesterday, Judge Tunim, who inspected the Cheshire jail last summer, says 60 per cent of those injecting drugs shared needles, a practice which can spread HIV, the virus that can lead to Aids.

The Styal findings are reportedly backed by the jail's board of visitors in its own report, and by prison officers, one of whom was quoted as saying:

inmates were "out of their heads much of the time".

A pilot programme of compulsory random drug-testing has been introduced in eight other jails. About 80 to 90 per cent of all prisoners use cannabis, and the abuse of harder drugs in jails is increasing. In 1993-94 there were 2,455 drugs finds in prisons.

Prison reformers yesterday claimed that compulsory drug-testing could jeopardise a voluntary scheme for HIV testing. "The majority of people in prison smoke cannabis and they could well decide not to co-operate with HIV testing," Nick Flynn, deputy director of the Prison Reform Trust, said.

A report in the *British Medical*

*Journal*, published today, attributes at least eight HIV transmissions to the sharing of contaminated needles and syringes at Glenochil Prison in Clackmannanshire. Statisticians at the Institute of Public Health in Cambridge are planning the largest study so far, through voluntary screening.

Some reformers claimed compulsory drug-testing would encourage prisoners to switch from cannabis to hard drugs, which are detectable in the urine for much shorter periods.

Chris Tchakovsky, of the campaign group Women in Prison, said yesterday that compulsory testing would have "disastrous" implications for prison security and the safety of officers. "The Prison Officers' Associ-

ation should boycott drugs-testing. Prison officers are in danger. They maintain a tacit consensus between officers and prisoners, but there are already signs that is breaking down."

The testing policy would add to tension arising from the recent toughening of prison regimes, she claimed. She said the problem was particularly acute at Holloway, one of the jails earmarked for the pilot scheme of compulsory testing.

The Prison Officers' Association said officers welcomed any acknowledgement of the scale of the drug problem, but were concerned that the drugs-testing was another example of the Home Secretary's "all stick and no carrot" approach to prison policy.

## Motorist too blind to see roadblock

A MOTORIST who had such poor eyesight that he mistook the flashing lights of a police roadblock for an ambulance was fined £100 by Reigate magistrates yesterday.

Three police cars repeatedly signalled to Ernest Cathery, 74, to pull over during a five-mile pursuit after they saw his Ford Escort weaving from side to side. When they tried to block the retired engineer's path by parking across the road, he drove round them. He was finally stopped after they boxed him in from the front and rear.

Cathery, of Caterham, Surrey, who was suffering from cataracts, said: "I wish they had let me know earlier that they were there. I didn't know what I had done wrong." He admitted careless driving and driving with defective eyesight and said he would use the bus in future.



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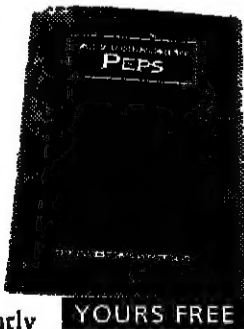
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PRUDENTIAL

## Machine meets man's craving for dry-cured bacon rashers

TRADITIONAL bacon is returning to breakfast tables (Robin Barnwell writes). Tired of finding shrivelled and shrunken rashers swimming in a white froth at the bottom of their frying pans, bacon lovers have long called for the dry-cured variety at an affordable price.

Supermarkets are competing to meet the growing demand for bacon not injected with water and other additives. Sales of dry-cured rashers have been rising in delicatessens, but until now it has been a luxury product, reflecting the cost of rubbing sides of pork with salt and saltpetre by hand.

The revival of real bacon

has been pioneered by a factory in Cookstown, Co Tyrone with a machine method that has taken two years to perfect. Uni-Pork is able to produce dry-cured back rashers that are Sainsbury's best seller at £2.39 a lb, competing with Safeway's dry-cured smoked bacon at £3.39 a lb and Tesco's at £2.83.

Traditional bacon's return has been welcomed by chefs. The television cook Keith Floyd praised the market-led approach. "Any bacon that puts back the proper bacon I would support 100 per cent."

However, John Pallister, a bacon expert at the Meat and Livestock Commission, is sceptical whether the popular-

ity of dry-cured bacon will be anything more than a passing fad. "I do not think that the industry could cope with wide-scale dry-cured treatment of bacon. It simply is not geared up to it," he said.

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Doubts raised over replacement tests by colleges to select candidates

# Scrapping of entrance exam splits Oxford dons

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

OXFORD colleges may set their own tests if the university's traditional entrance examination is abolished at a meeting of admissions tutors next week.

A two-year review of the university's admissions procedures will culminate in a vote of college representatives on Thursday. If a proposal to scrap the entrance examination is accepted, many applicants are likely to face college tests as well as interviews.

Critics of the examination have been pressing for its abolition for several years because they believe it favours independent schools. But the lobby for its retention was gaining strength yesterday.

Eric Anderson, Rector of Lincoln College and former Head Master of Eton, said: "I think it is particularly ill-advised to do this at the moment, when the decline of A-level standards means that the university is usually choosing between people with three A grades. The entrance exam gives people a better chance to demonstrate real quality in their subject, regardless of the school they come from."

More than half of Oxford's undergraduates win a place through the examination, although the proportion selected on A-level results and interviews has grown in recent years. Over 70 per cent of independent school applicants choose the entrance exam.

Next week's meeting will discuss the establishment of standardised tests that admissions tutors will be able to use in addition to interviews.

Dr Anderson said abolition

would entail a time-consuming process for colleges. "There will have to be more and longer interviews if they are to be as fair."

Although the demise of the examination has been predicted since Cambridge abolished its equivalent a decade ago, several colleges oppose its replacement. Michael Vaughan-Lee, admissions tutor for Christ Church, said: "I hope that the entrance exam will be retained, but it is impossible to tell. Some colleges are being very cagey."

Dr Vaughan-Lee added: "It is time that the question was resolved one way or the other. I do not think it is a matter of a state and independent schools divide. The exam may favour pupils from good schools of whatever type, but any selection process does that."

Jane Minto, Oxford's secretary for admissions, said: "The university is very concerned to attract able candidates from different types of school and background. The issue is equity and accessibility. This proposal has come forward because some people feel the entrance examination is placing them at a disadvantage."

The examination consists of two or three papers taken by pupils during the first term of their second year in the sixth form. Unlike Cambridge, which abolished its entrance examination ten years ago, Oxford still admits fewer pupils from state schools than independent schools.

Many Oxford dons are torn between a desire for the fairest possible admissions system and the practical problems of selecting students from a pool of highly qualified candidates. Colin Blakemore, Waynflete Professor of Physiology, said: "There are lots of disadvantages to the entrance exam, and on balance I would like to see it go, but without some second stage of selection it is almost like sticking in a pin. There may have to be some on-the-spot assessment of candidates if the exam is abolished."

Most heads of independent schools oppose the narrowing of entry routes to Oxford. But Martin Stephen, High Master of Manchester Grammar School, said abolition was inevitable. "I have thought for several years that you could not have just one university setting a completely different exam. My own answer would be to reintroduce the S level."



Oxford colleges from the air: admissions tutors will vote on whether to scrap the university entrance exam

## Long lines of scribbling pens, except for the boy who burst into tears

OXFORD'S entrance exams have forced many a would-be graduate with their cleverly worded questions designed to challenge an imaginative brain rather than one trained to soak up knowledge like a sponge (Nick Nutall writes).

Many graduates remember writing essays based on a one word question such as "Compassion". Others, sitting biology exams, recall teasers such as "What biological problems would Jack's Beanstalk have encountered?". Some remember the exams with affection, others with horror.

The Oxford entrance exam was introduced in 1963, though groups of colleges had set their own before that. Peter Ainsworth, the Conservative MP for Surrey East, read English literature and language at Lincoln College in the 1970s. "I remember the exam very well. It was the most enjoyable one I ever took. It was a great relief from O and A levels where there was an enormous concentration on fact and memory and regurgitation," he said.

"The Oxford exam seemed to test knowledge and was wider and more interesting. It tested creativity. Although I would not want to take it again, you would have to have extremely good reasons to change this. Mr Ainsworth recalled one question that he

### THE QUESTIONS

Oxford's entrance examination has always been considered a more wide-ranging and sophisticated test of subject knowledge than A level. This is a selection of questions from the 1993 examination in history:

- ☐ Is it true that the person who controls the past controls the present?
- ☐ You have been asked to advise the Government about the place of history in the school curriculum. Write a paper, setting out and defending your proposals.
- ☐ What can we learn about a society from its jokes?
- ☐ Can art and/or music ever be wholly abstract?
- ☐ Why has the history of Greece and Rome been a compelling fascination to subsequent historical epochs?
- ☐ Has the role of women in past societies been mainly determined by nature or convention?

said came up regularly. "It was along the lines of 'Writers in the later day Roman Empire cited disturbances at chariot races as indicative of a collapsing culture. Does this have any relevance today?' So people would write about football hooligans... but not the House of Lords or the House of Commons, of course."

Julian Anderson, director-general of the Country Landowners Association, studied science. "I remember the exam well. It took place in Keeble College Hall. The hall is built of brick, rather ugly brick, and this has absorbed the smells of all the meals ever cooked," he said. "The Keeble clock is also one of the most

long chiming and tedious in the world. So, if you are not doing terribly well you are deeply conscious of time and smell." He said everywhere he looked there were lines of scribbling pens, except for the

applicant next to him who spent his time screwing up paper before bursting into tears. "The pressure was colossal and there was a trick in the question. The paper tested if you could see the swerve. His was: 'What is the value of a hypothesis once largely believed but subsequently discredited?'"

Mr Anderson said the value of the exam, which was "nerve-racking if you were doing well and sickening if you were doing badly", was that it valued an intelligent stab. "The interview that goes with it was also very important... they are looking to how your mind tackles it. The exam sorts out not how brilliantly you have crammed but if you have the beginnings of a brain that can think its way out of corners."

Leading article, page 17

### Crede

## A patron saint to suit the Euro-sceptics

Michael Walsh

IN THE concluding chapter of *Saints*, Lord Longford says "the total number of canonised saints is uncertain but it runs to several thousand". He could be more accurate. The most thorough listing of those men and women recognised as saints (or, one degree under, as blessed) by the Roman Catholic Church includes some 10,000 names. Fewer than 2,000, have been formally canonised — officially declared to be saints after a period of investigation into their lives and writings.

The declaration that someone may be venerated as a saint is, within the Roman Catholic Church, the prerogative of the Pope. It was not always so. By far the greater number of saints in the calendar lived during the first millennium of Christianity when proofs of sanctity were not too rigorous. The papacy took control towards the end of the 12th century, and the number of the officially holy dropped sharply. Pope John Paul II is striving to redress the balance. He has canonised as many men and women as all his predecessors put together. In the recent inflation of saint-making the British have not fared well. But in the first century of official papal canonisation the English were to the fore — Thomas Becket, of course, in 1172, within three years of his death; Gilbert of Sempringham, canonised in 1202; Wulfstan of Worcester (1203); Hugh of Lincoln (1200); William of York (1220); Edmund of Abingdon (1246); and Richard of Chichester (1262).

The feast of one of them, Gilbert of Sempringham in Lincolnshire, is celebrated today. It is customary to commemorate a saint on his or her dies natalis, or birth-

day into Heaven, ie, the anniversary of death. Gilbert died on February 4, 1189, at 106. His life is well attested not simply because of the care with which his canonisation documents were prepared, but because he was a founder of a religious order, the only Englishman or woman of whom that could be said until well after the Reformation.

The Gilbertines began as an order for women but lay brothers were added to manage the nuns' property and priests attached to look after government and provide spiritual direction. By the time of Gilbert's death there were 1500 members in 13 houses. Four were priories of men and nine "double monasteries", two houses existing side by side, one for men, the other for women. Curiously, each had a different rule for life: the nuns followed that of St Benedict; the priests the Augustinian rule; the lay brother the rule of Cîteaux. Gilbert, unassuming and utterly lacking in ambition, tried to hand over governance to the English clerician abbots, but they refused. Gilbert remained in charge almost to his death. Gilbertines disappeared for ever in the suppression of monasteries during the reign of Henry VIII.

No foundations outside the realm which, in that time of crisis, might have ensured survival, were made by Gilbert or later Masters of the Order. A patron saint, then, for the Euro-sceptics? ☐ Michael Walsh is librarian of Hengrove College, University of London, and biographer of Pope John Paul II.



At Your Service. Weekend, page 2



Anderson: "Exam gives people a better chance"

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# Blunkett bolsters Labour shift on opt-out schools

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR'S policy shift on grant-maintained schools was reinforced last night when David Blunkett urged the party's councillors to build on the present system.

The Shadow Education Secretary made clear that the party expected Labour councillors to co-operate in allowing schools to control their budgets. In the past he has called for abolition of the grant-maintained system, but yesterday said local authorities should develop a flexible partnership with the 1,000 schools within it.

At the party's local government conference in Brighton, Mr Blunkett said: "It is not a question of looking back, but looking forward. And I appeal to councillors here today to be imaginative in how they approach such partnership with schools."

Ministers have accused Labour-controlled councils of staging concerted campaigns to discourage parents from opting out of education authority control, but Mr Blunkett said: "We must build on the experience of local management of schools, provide equitable funding arrangements, enhance accountability and positively support those schools with

agreed programmes for improvement."

Both Mr Blunkett and Tony Blair, the party leader, are drawing up a Labour education policy that will retain grant-maintained schools but restore a link with local authorities. After Mr Blair's controversial decision to send his son to a grant-maintained school, the party moved towards allowing the schools to operate "within a democratic framework".

Mr Blunkett indicated the party's shift in opinion in December but yesterday's speech was unusual in being aimed specifically at Labour councillors.

Mr Blunkett also pledged that Labour would press the Office for Standards in Education to take more positive action over schools that are found to have shortcomings. "We want to see a truly effective Ofsted, which doesn't just highlight good or bad practice but which intervenes where schools are failing. One where the advice and support at a local level helps schools to recover, rather than allow them to sink into closure."

He pointed to Labour plans for a massive expansion of opportunity through educa-

tion into the next century, reducing elitism in schools and universities. "As we approach the millennium, we face some stark choices for our country. We can continue to exist in a society where good education is still seen as beyond the wit of the majority of the people — and is only available to the few. Or we can build a quiet revolution which changes the nature of opportunity, the ability of the many to succeed and the competitiveness of Britain in the 21st century."

John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, joined the attack on the government's education policy, accusing ministers of cutting budgets to state schools while private schools have increasing resources. "That's not the politics of envy. It's the politics of injustice and unfairness," he said.

"Education should not depend on a parent's right to pay. It should be the right of every child in a modern society to extend their ability to the full. That's why we believe in a strong, comprehensive education system."

Mr Prescott called on councillors to capitalise on Tory party troubles by fighting an aggressive campaign in the local elections in May.



Sir Nicholas en route to victory in 1992. Next time, he says, the Tories will lose

## Fairbairn attacks 'no-hoper' chosen to fight his seat

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Tory MP Sir Nicholas Fairbairn, condemned the man chosen to replace him at the next general election as a hopeless candidate yesterday.

Sir Nicholas, who is gravely ill with hepatitis and is standing down, warned the Tory party that it would lose the Perth and Kinross seat because John Godfrey, a London-based banker, was unelectable. "He is a donee," Sir Nicholas said. "I don't think he knows anything about Perthshire or Scotland. I have had numerous calls and letters from local Tory supporters who agree that he is totally irrelevant."

Perth and Kinross has

always been considered one of the Tories' safer Scottish seats. Sir Nicholas polled 40 per cent of the vote in 1992 and has a majority of 2,094 over the Scottish National Party. He has told his constituency chairman, Martin Robb, that the voters believe Mr Godfrey will be an absentee MP and that he will not win the seat.

Sir Nicholas, who lists his recreations in *Who's Who* as "drawing ships, making quips, confounding Whips and scuttling drips", made his comments in an interview with *The Herald* newspaper.

Yesterday Mr Godfrey said he was disappointed and

surprised but not particularly upset. "I take it in pretty good heart knowing what Nicky is like. I'm surprised because I have had a number of talks with him and correspondence and so far he has been helpful."

Mr Godfrey defended his Scottish credentials. He was brought up in Invernesshire and went to school in Lochaber. He fought the tough seat of Glasgow Maryhill in 1992. "All my roots are in Scotland. I've been away for a few years because I've taken the Tebbit line and got on my bike to follow a job but I am keen to move back," he said.

## 'Treasury must fund teacher pay rise'

BY NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE efforts of Gillian Shephard to build bridges with teachers will be severely jeopardised unless the Treasury offers more money for their annual pay award, one of the Tory party's most senior educationists says.

Sir Malcolm Thornton, chairman of the all-party Commons Education Select Committee, said the Treasury should make available at least an extra £100 million to avoid teacher redundancies, bigger class sizes and a renewed battle with the teaching unions.

Sir Malcolm is writing to Mrs Shephard, the Education Secretary, to back the case for more money to meet the likely shortfall between the amount allocated for the pay award and that recommended by the pay review body. Next week the Cabinet is expected to approve an increase of about 2.9 per cent but local authorities have on average only an extra 1.1 per cent available.

Sir Malcolm said: "The one thing that we cannot do is to accept a salary award and then turn round to local authorities and say it is not going to be fully funded — tough. That is a recipe for confrontation and would destroy almost overnight the work that Gillian has been trying to do."

It has been speculated that Mrs Shephard is seeking up to £200 million extra to help to meet the shortfall and may raise the matter in Cabinet next week. However, the Education Department said that she had not formally approached the Treasury and it was up to local authorities to meet the award by making savings on overheads.

## Former Kinnock adviser moves up

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

A FORMER adviser to Neil Kinnock has been promoted to a senior post on a forum considering the future of the NHS in an apparent attempt to restore the group's political credibility.

Patricia Hewitt, who worked for Mr Kinnock when he was Labour leader, has become vice-chairman of Healthcare 2000, the independent forum chaired by Sir Duncan Nichol, former chief executive of the NHS. Her appointment came after concerns were raised about Sir Duncan's links with the private healthcare organisation Bupa. Sir Duncan retired from the NHS last April and joined Bupa as a non-executive director six months later.

Ms Hewitt, who recently left her post as deputy director of the Institute of Public Policy Research, a Labour think-tank, was a member of the steering committee of Healthcare 2000 until last week's promotion. She said it had been suggested that she share the workload with the chairman. Sir Duncan was unavailable for comment yesterday.

The independent forum, launched with a letter to *The Times* last August, is backed by £100,000 from a consortium of 36 drugs companies. It aims to report on the future options for healthcare in Britain by June. Patricia Hewitt accepted undisclosed libel damages from the *Mail* on Sunday yesterday over an article that said she had concealed a previous marriage to the son of a Tory minister. The paper accepted that its claims were unfounded and apologised.

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## Rescuers agree terms

## Hillsborough officers sue their force

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

TWENTY-THREE police officers are to sue their own police force alleging it was responsible for the psychiatric disorder they suffered after the Hillsborough disaster.

Fourteen others are expected to receive compensation payments of up to £250,000 after South Yorkshire Police, Sheffield Wednesday Football Club and Eastwood and Partners, a firm of consulting engineers, accepted liability for their condition.

Payments will be assessed on the basis of the suffering and loss of actual and potential earnings. Damages are likely to range from £10,000 to £250,000, with the highest awards going to young officers whose prospects have been seriously undermined.

Relatives of those who died who tried to obtain compensation for post-traumatic stress were ruled ineligible unless they were parents or siblings and had been inside the ground rather than watching on television.

Solicitors for the three organisations admitted liability for the suffering of the 14 officers who were trying to

rescue football supporters trapped in two enclosures in April 1989. There were 96 deaths. Talks on the size of the settlement for people claiming to have nightmares, nervous exhaustion and depression are expected to take months. However, claims made by the other officers not in the enclosures or involved in the rescue will be contested.

Simon Allen, a solicitor instructed by the Police Federation, said two inspectors, five sergeants and 30 constables were alleging post-traumatic stress syndrome as a result of what they saw. "Some are still carrying on with their duties but others have had to retire," he said. Fifteen had retired on medical grounds.

The Municipal Mutual Insurance Company, insurers for the three defendants, conceded liability after being advised they were likely to lose in court because the 14 officers rescued survivors.

The remaining 23 are suing the force in its capacity as being allegedly responsible for the disaster.

Leading article, page 17

## Proximity is key to a successful claim

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE principle that damages may be awarded in the civil courts for psychological injury caused by witnessing a disaster has been upheld since Victorian times.

Such awards have become increasingly common. Last week a man whose life fell apart after his two daughters drowned when a car driven by a river was awarded £1.1 million for post-traumatic stress.

It was not until the House of Lords ruling in the cases brought by relatives of Hillsborough victims that definitive guidelines were laid down on who could claim.

The claimant must be able to show that the defendant could have foreseen the disaster and was at fault in failing to take adequate safety precautions. They must also show that the psychological injury was caused by witnessing the scene.

However, the key test is that of "proximity". The claimant must be close to the disaster physically, or to have heard about it soon after and be a relative or a rescuer.

If a person crosses the proximity hurdle, the test the courts then apply is "whether a reasonably strong-minded person would be shocked".



Morrison at the console: "The sound was classic English-cathedral: rich, robust but not raucous. Trollope would have loved it. Moreover, the touch felt right"

## Even my rusty Bach acquired a sheen

## Hi-tech digital organ hits all the right notes

WITH my right hand and left foot clamped on something that resembled a D major chord, my left hand reached for the knob invitingly labelled "16ft Posaune". Recklessly, I pulled it out. Sixteen feet of megawatt trombone sound surged from my toe. The nave of Worcester Cathedral fairly shook with noise. Visiting schoolchildren grinned; minor canons winced. Outside, the statue of Sir Edward Elgar probably turned on its pedestal.

I was seated not at the console of a conventional pipe organ, but at the Bradford Computing Organ, the space-age interloper that is at the centre of the Sheldonian Theatre dispute in Oxford. It has no pipes, no mighty wind-chest or bellows; just sophisticated micro-circuitry, a large electronic palette of digitally sampled sounds, and 40 big speakers on high ledges that run the length of the nave.

Developed at Bradford University, some 200 of these computing organs have been installed in churches, colleges, even Holloway Prison. But the Worcester instrument, bought for £75,000 in 1989 when building work curtailed use of the cathedral's sprawling Victorian organ, is the most famous electronic organ in Britain. After all, Worcester Cathedral — home of the world's oldest choral festival — has a tradition for fine

**Oxford scholars are opposing an electronic organ for the Sheldonian Theatre to replace a pipe organ. Richard Morrison tried Worcester Cathedral's model**

music-making stretching back centuries. Dr Donald Hunt, the Worcester organist, is convinced that he is not short-changing this heritage by introducing the Bradford organ. "We have used it for BBC broadcasts and commercial recordings. Nobody has noticed the difference. Try it yourself."

I did. Pulling out the "Festival Trumpet" I attempted something jolly by Purcell. The trumpet timbre was pure, powerful and thrilling. My fingers, unfortunately, were not. Dr Hunt tactfully muttered something about "meetings to attend" and swiftly exited.

Switching to something less demanding from the Victorian repertoire, I decided to use one of the bigger "swell" combinations. The sound was classic English-cathedral: rich, robust but not raucous. Trollope would have loved it. Moreover, the touch of the

organ felt right: just enough resistance under the fingers. Not a bit like those electronic keyboards in High Street stores. Of course, there is a £74,900 price difference.

The secret weapon, however, is a little button that switches one whole manual from romantic, 19th-century stops into "Baroque" mode, opening up a range of 18th-century mixtures and breathy flutes that sound utterly authentic. This is surely the most powerful argument in favour of a computing organ being installed in the Sheldonian.

Even my rusty Bach and Buxtehude acquired a certain authentic sheen, at least until I came to the difficult bits. As a cathedral verging on hostility to the computing organ when it first came to Worcester, "Some old dears in the congregation complained that it gave them migraines. We told them we would add an anti-migraine device. Now they are happy."

My only reservation is that the deepest pedal notes do not thunder convincingly enough. Nevertheless, even I could make a "full organ" combination resonate gloriously through this mighty cathedral. Such a feeling of megalomania, too!

By this time, however, the men in red cassocks had come to lead me gently away. My hour of power was over.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Mother free after nearly killing baby

Rana Thorburn, 22, nearly drowned her daughter Chloe, aged 20 months, when she snatched while bathing her. She held the baby under the water for up to two minutes after screaming at the child. "Go away, go away", but she saved her daughter by giving her the kiss of life. Newcastle Crown Court was told. Thorburn, who admitted inflicting grievous bodily harm, was put on probation for two months.

## Pet hate

A £500 reward is being offered to catch the killer of seven cats in one street who impaled their heads on spikes and then disembowelled the pets in their owners' gardens in Newark, Nottinghamshire.

## Final furlong

Royal Military Police horse patrols in Aldershot, Hampshire, are to end after 140 years because of defence cuts. The Mounted Troop of 160 Provosts Co, known as the "Redcaps", will stage a farewell parade on March 5.

## Youth jailed

DeRoy Kelly, 17, was sentenced by the Old Bailey to two years' custody for torturing a girl aged 12. Kelly, of Tooting, southwest London, had admitted having a firearm with intent, false imprisonment and assault.

## Museum extends

A scheme to extend the Ruskin Museum at Coniston village in the Lake District at a cost of £250,000 has been approved by National Park planners. The writer John Ruskin lived there from 1872 to 1900.

## Woolly goats

Hundreds of angora goats that have been sheared at a farm at Longhope, Gloucestershire, have been dressed in woollen jumpers to keep out the cold. The clothes have been donated by local schoolchildren.



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Lawyers will go to law lords after court approves detention

# Illegal immigrants seeking asylum lose right to be free

By RICHARD FORD  
HOME CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD won a test case yesterday reversing a judge's decision that could have freed from detention centres hundreds of illegal immigrants seeking asylum.

The Court of Appeal ruled that the detention of four men under the 1971 Immigration Act was justifiable. But the Home Secretary freed the three Indians and a Pakistani and allowed them temporary admission to the United Kingdom while their applications for asylum were being investigated.

They surrendered to immigration officials in the appeal court buildings and were immediately released. An immigration official said that it was not proposed to release other detainees in a similar category.

Rehmat Khan, 50, from Bolton, Parmjeet Singh Virk, 30, from Manchester, Inderpal Singh, 28, and Pal Taggar, 29, both from Huddersfield, must live at the addresses they gave immigration officials and report week-



Howard: "Detention is only a last resort"

ly to the police. Lawyers for the four men were refused leave to challenge the ruling in the House of Lords but plan to petition the law lords for permission to appeal. Liaquat Malik, a solicitor for three of them, said: "I am shocked at the decision."

Mr Howard had appealed against a decision by Mr Justice Dyson that illegal immigrants who applied for political asylum could not be

held in custody under the 1971 Act. The four men had argued that once they had applied for political asylum there was no power under the Act to detain them.

Mr Justice Dyson's ruling meant that immigration officers had no power to interrogate, detain or deport the men while their applications for asylum were pending determination.

During the appeal court hearing, David Pannick, QC, for the Home Secretary, said that "no rational Parliament" could have intended such surprising results. All an illegal immigrant had to do to be set free was assert an asylum claim, despite the concerns of immigration officers that they might abscond while their asylum applications were considered.

Lord Justice Leggatt, sitting with Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Ralph Gibson, overturned the judgment. He said the men were illegal immigrants who had not been given leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom.

He said that Mr Khan arrived in the UK in 1990 and



Inderpal Singh, left, and Pal Taggar, second right, with solicitor Liaquat Malik, far right

was given leave to enter "as a result of deception", according to the Home Office. He said he wanted to visit relatives but in 1991 applied for political asylum, though his wife and six children still live in Pakistan.

Last year he was notified that he was an illegal immigrant, liable to be detained in custody pending a decision on deportation.

Mr Virk, Mr Singh and Mr Taggar arrived in Britain hidden aboard a lorry last year and shortly afterwards applied for asylum. The men, who work in a shoe factory in Manchester, were served with

a notice similar to Mr Khan last December.

Outside the court, Mr Taggar, from the Punjab, said that he was seeking asylum in Britain because his life was in danger in India. "No one knows what is happening in India," he said. "They don't know how we are treated in prison, very bad, like animals."

Immigration welfare groups warned that the appeal court ruling would lead to the further expansion of the use of detention for asylum applicants.

Nicholas Blake, QC, chair-

man of the Immigration Law Practitioners Association, said the plight of those fleeing from persecution was worsened by the fact that they could spend nine months or longer in a detention centre or prison with no right of appeal.

In a statement welcoming the appeal court ruling, Mr Howard said: "Detention of asylum seekers is only used as a last resort. Less than 1.5 per cent of asylum seekers are detained. They are only detained if it is felt that they would not voluntarily comply with restrictions placed on their release."



## KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

### Kings on the run

On the topic of king hunts, today's games, one ancient, one relatively modern, reveal the power of a queen sacrifice to lure the enemy king to its doom. The first game is one of the most spectacular king pursuits on record, with White delivering checkmate by casting.

White: Edward Lasker  
Black: Sir George Thomas  
London, 1910

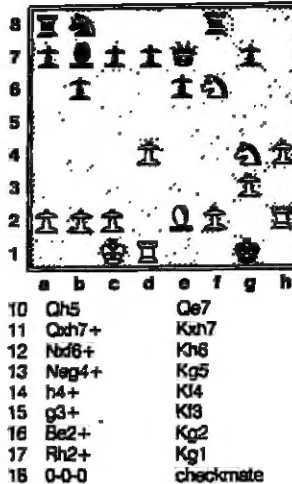
**Dutch Defence**  
1 d4 f5  
2 Nc3 Nf6  
3 Nf3 e6  
4 Bg5 Be7  
5 Bxb6 Bxb6  
6 12c a4 bxa4  
7 Nxb4 b6  
8 Bc3 Bb7  
9 Ne5 0-0

The next game shows an elegant offer of White's queen, ultimately placing the black king at the mercy of a check-mating crossfire, set up by White's bishop and pawns.

White: Petrosian  
Black: Pachman  
Bled 1961

**King's Indian Attack**  
1 Nf3 c5  
2 g3 Nc6  
3 Bc2 g6  
4 0-0 Bg7  
5 d3 e6  
6 e4 Nge7  
7 Re1 0-0  
8 e5 Qc6  
9 exd6 Qx7  
10 Nb3 Qd6  
11 Bf4 Nb3  
12 Nc4 Qb6  
13 axb3 axb3  
14 Bb5 Bb8  
15 Qc2 Kf8  
16 Re4 Kg8  
17 Qd6+ Kf6  
18 Bc5+ Kg6  
19 Bg7 Black resigns

### Diagram of final position



There is no defence against a swift checkmate starting with h4+.

### World championship

The semi-finals of the Fide world championship start next week in Sangli Nagar, India. Garry Kasparov (US) faces Valery Salov (Russia), while Anatoly Karpov (Russia) plays the Belarussian grandmaster Boris Gelfand. While Karpov is the clear favourite in his contest, the clash between Kasparov and Salov is wide open.

Winning Move, Weekend, page 29



## SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

Dealer East

North-South game, IMPs

♠ KQ84	♥ Q732	♦ J108	♣ J4
♠ AJ105	♥ K64	♦ K	♣ K8652
♠ 9873	♥ 9	♦ 762	♣ A10973
♠ 7	♥ AJ1085	♦ AQ543	♣ 92

W	N	E	S
Levin	Mansell	Kasle	Cope
Double Pass	INT (1)	Pass	10
Pass	4♥	All pass	2♥ (2)

Contract: Four Hearts by South. Opening lead: five of clubs

By ROBERT SHEEHAN  
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

(1) Without intervention, North would respond One Heart. However, after the Double it is less likely that there is a major-suit fit, and so INT to show a few scattered values becomes more attractive.

(2) Even though he is minimum in terms of high cards, the shape justifies a reverse.

This is another hand described in the Macallan Pairs bulletin (edited by Patrick Jourdain). Mansell and Cope are South Africa's leading pair. When East won the first club he continued with a low one. Declarer ruffed and led a spade towards the king-queen. Levin won the ace and played a second spade. Cope

won and played a heart to the 10 and king, and Levin exited with a heart.

At this point Cope had a straightforward calculation. It appeared that East had at least five clubs to the ace but could not bid over North's INT. Hence West had to have the king of diamonds. Therefore there was no hope unless it was a singleton; so he laid down the ace of diamonds. It is customary bridge journalism to add "and was duly rewarded".

When the Irish international Keith Singleton did something similar on a hand I described a few weeks ago I made some ghastly crack based on his name. I suppose you might do something with Cope... no, better let it go.

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Happy plays the banjo from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", 1937, gouache on celluloid. Sold for £1760 in April 1994.

### Enchanting Animation at Christie's South Kensington

Christie's South Kensington are currently accepting entries for their sale of Animation Art and Collectables on 24 April 1995.

The sale will include an exciting range of animation cels and drawings from the early 1930s to the 1970s, from films such as Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Peter Pan and Lady and the Tramp. We are also accepting material from other major studios such as Warner Brothers, Hanna Barbera and M.G.M. The animation art is supplemented by a kaleidoscope of memorabilia including rare tinplate and soft toys, watches and porcelain toothbrush holders.

The deadline for entries is 20 February.

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THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 1995

Spotlight

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Spotlight falls on First Lady-in-waiting who makes Barbara Bush look like a pushy careerist

## Balladur's constant wife takes shy step forward

PARIS FILE  
by CHARLES BREMNER



NOW that France views the spring presidential elections as little more than a detail on Edouard Balladur's stroll into the Elysee Palace, attention is turning to the woman likely to follow Danielle Mitterrand as the nation's *premiere dame*.

The notion of a First Lady dates back only to the presidency of Vincent Auriol in the early 1950s. Until then, mistresses rather than spouses left more of a mark on history. The most legendary pre-

miere dame was Yvonne de Gaulle, the "French Queen Victoria" whose old-world ways were such a contrast to Jackie Kennedy. To understand Marie-Joséphine Balladur, you only have to think of Hillary Clinton and reverse the picture. "Ma Josée", as her hus-

band calls her, is such a self-effacing helpmate that she makes Barbara Bush look like a pushy careerist. The paragon of discreet bourgeois charm, the former Mlle Delacour took to her

1957 marriage as one enters holy orders, devoting herself to Edouard and their four sons.

Before the presidential campaign, Mme Balladur had rarely appeared in public and she has only just swallowed her dislike of the press enough to allow *Paris Match* to photograph her serving tea to Edouard in the gilded salon of their boulevard Delcassé apartment. They also have homes in Chamonix and Deauville, the resort retreats of old money.

Mme Balladur has a husband famously unaffected by the wandering eye that is the norm among French politicians. Edouard's conjugal devotion is so famous that his rivals mock his iron habit of going home by 8pm, leaving all work behind. Mme Balladur is



Marie-Joséphine and Edouard Balladur enjoy a cosy domesticity rare among French political families

said to have a playful side and is rumoured to have once waved a lighter at a Johnny Hallyday rock concert. But she is more famous for her strict morals. Early in M Balladur's premiership in 1993, she refused to shake hands with

the unmarried partner of a Cabinet minister. She is also reported to have frozen out Pascal Clement, the Minister for Relations with Parliament. His offence was to crack a joke when ministers' wives came to meet their husbands at a

suburban château. When their coach drew up, M Clement quipped: "Voilà le BMC!" The initials stand for "bordel militaire de campagne" — the brothel wagon that once travelled with armies.

## Bulletins of grief

FRENCH television viewers have been tuning in with ghoulis fascination this week to the personal agony of a newswriter.

Patrick Poivre-d'Arvor, 47, who hosts the country's most-watched news programme, has survived accusations over the years that he made up stories. His standing has not been dented by his forthcoming trial on charges of receiving gifts from an allegedly crooked businessman nor by a romance with Claire Chazal, his back-up newswriter on TF1.

However, Poivre-d'Arvor drew criticism this week when he went on with the news two days after Solenn, his 18-year-old daughter, committed suicide by throwing herself in front of a train. He opened with: "Nothing is more unjust than the loss of a child, an adolescent." He was referring to the deaths of six pupils in an accident, but few watching were unaware of his own sorrow. The popular media hailed his courage but *Le Monde* said there was something unhealthy in the way he was parading his suffering.

He received similar criticism two years ago when he published a book of his letters to Solenn, who was suffering from anorexia.

## French Socialists seek saviour in presidential fight

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS

FRENCH Socialists, deserted by their potential saviour and still dazed by defeat, are due tomorrow to appoint a presidential candidate whose main task will be to save their party from electoral disaster.

Regional officials and the leadership of President Mitterrand's party will gather to declare the outcome of a "primary" vote in which all 103,000 members were asked to choose between Henri Emmanuelli, 49, their first secretary, and Lionel Jospin, 57, one of his predecessors in the job.

There was no clear lead as counting began last night although pollsters had earlier reported a two-point margin in favour of M Jospin. An austere intellectual with an image of rectitude, M Jospin scores higher with the public than the blunt-spoken son of a Communist electrician who leads the party.

Not since the late 1960s, before M Mitterrand whipped together France's eternally feuding Left, have the Socialists entered a presidential campaign with such dim prospects. After a false dawn last autumn when polls suggested that Jacques Delors could defeat Edouard Balladur, the Gaullist Prime Minister and favourite, the party has slumped back into the disarray that followed its rout from government in 1993.

M Delors' refusal of the party's nomination followed the decisions of other popular figures not to seek the Socialist banner. These included Jack Lang, the Culture Minister, and Martine Aubry, a rising star who is also M Delors' daughter.

Initial reports suggested that many Socialists had shunned the ballot, reflecting widespread disgust over the latest battle to erupt in what Michel Rocard, another former leader, describes as a "field of ruins". Only degrees of ideology separate the contenders. M Jospin, who served as Education Minister in the second Mitterrand term after 1988, enjoys the support of party reformers.

M Emmanuelli, who took over from M Rocard last July, controls the apparatus. More of a glad-handing politician



Emmanuelli: 17-year record as an MP

than M Jospin, he also holds a stronger record as an MP. He has retained a seat from the southwestern Landes region since 1978.

M Jospin briefly held a seat in the Garonne department and is now only a county councillor. M Emmanuelli, however, suffers the handicap of standing trial next month over charges involving illicit financing when he served as party treasurer.

Neither of the contenders, both former Mitterrand loyalists, enjoys measurable popularity beyond the party. The victor's big challenge, according to polls and pundits, will be to score well enough in the April 23 first round to enter the run-off on May 7. Polls this week showed this slot was more likely to be won by Jacques Chirac, the Prime Minister's Gaullist rival.

An honourable second place for the Socialists could lay the foundation for recovery of the party which, although discredited by its performance in office, still enjoys the emotional loyalty of the 40 per cent of France which considers itself to belong to the traditional Left.

The victor tomorrow will be kept to a new platform, agreed this week, which swings the party back to traditional left-wing policies. These include calls for raising the minimum wage, cutting working hours without reducing pay and refuting the economy by abandoning the commitment to the strong franc. Although the party remains strongly pro-European, the platform marks a striking break with the hard money discipline imposed by the Mitterrand administration after 1983.

Although the Socialist fortunes are at a low ebb, the party leaders say they are convinced they can make headway against M Balladur once their candidate opens his campaign. The Prime Minister has so far enjoyed something of a free ride, cruising far ahead of M Chirac, his fraternal rival. M Emmanuelli promised to "wake up this campaign and force M Balladur to get out of his sedan chair and have a real debate about the real state of French society".



Rocard: kept out of "the field of ruins"

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# Trade war looms as US acts to end China piracy

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

AMERICA will this morning announce the largest set of punitive trade sanctions in its history to crack down on rampant piracy of American music, films and software.

Barring a last-minute agreement by China, the Clinton Administration is expected to impose 100 per cent tariffs on at least \$1 billion (£638 million) worth of Chinese goods, a move that could trigger a full-blown trade war between the two countries because China has threatened to retaliate.

Last year America imported more than \$36 billion worth of Chinese goods, and sold it more than \$9 billion of American products.

Mickey Kantor, the American Trade Representative, warned Peking yesterday that the Clinton Administration would not hesitate to impose "the largest sanctions in retaliation in American history" unless Peking met Washington's demands by today's deadline. They know what we need. They know what is appropriate. They know what they need to do to be consistent with international norms and it is time they reacted correctly," Mr Kantor declared, but he seemed pessimistic that they would.

Last night, there was no real sense of crisis in Peking, just a feeling that more moderate counsels would prevail. There

was no indication that the Chinese side had accepted an invitation from Mr Kantor to continue discussions in Washington, after the breakdown of nine days of talks last Saturday. But then most of China was still shut down in the aftermath of the lunar new year festival and will still be undergoing something of a hangover today when the American deadline expires.

Ann Stevenson-Yang, Peking representative of the US-China Business Council, said she was both optimistic and pessimistic over the trade dispute. She said that Mr Kantor would announce the sanctions but would give a grace period for goods already on the way. "That will give a last window of opportunity for talks," she said. "I am fairly optimistic the problems will be solved."

Under counter-measures announced by the Chinese Government if the Americans go ahead with their sanctions, tariffs on imports of American liquor, cigarettes, cosmetics, game machines and ironically video cassettes — which are allegedly widely counterfeited — will be increased by 100 per cent. Chinese businessmen have claimed that American exporters would lose their market share to competitors from Japan and Europe if there was a trade war.

The Americans have been

trying for years to end blatant Chinese piracy of American videotapes, compact discs and other intellectual property that costs American businesses an estimated \$1 billion a year. Washington believed it had prevailed two years ago when China agreed to new laws banning the illegal copying of foreign products, but the laws were not enforced. Yesterday compact discs were being hawked by street vendors in Peking for one-tenth of their market price in the West.

The Clinton Administration has made no secret of how much it values continued trade with China, which is the world's fastest-growing market. Last year President Clinton even reversed an election pledge by ending the linkage between China's preferential trading status and its poor human rights record. But Mr Kantor insisted the Administration had "100 per cent across-the-board support" from corporate America for taking retaliatory action.

American-Chinese relations are again deteriorating despite the Administration's efforts to embrace rather than isolate China. Earlier this week the State Department issued a report stating that there had been no improvement over the past year in China's reprehensible human rights record.



Peruvian reinforcements board boats at Bagua on their way to the Amazon front

## Ecuador and Peru agree 'in principle'

FROM REUTER  
IN RIO DE JANEIRO

DELEGATIONS from Peru and Ecuador attending peace talks in Rio de Janeiro agreed a ceasefire yesterday and also agreed in principle to an accord that would end the border conflict, but the deal still requires approval by their governments.

The proposed agreement, reached after three days of talks, has been sent to Lima and Quito for government approval, said Sebastião do Rego Barros, the Brazilian Deputy Foreign Minister. He gave no details of the accord, but added that the talks would resume later.

Fighting between Peru and Ecuador broke out eight days ago in a disputed Amazon border area to which both countries lay claim. Peruvian troops attacked Ecuadorian positions in the area on Thursday. Peru says it has killed 43 Ecuadorian soldiers and lost 11 of its men; Ecuador says 33 soldiers have died, 28 of them Peruvians.

President Clinton and Javier Solana, the Spanish Foreign Minister, have both called on the two belligerents to put an immediate end to the hostilities.

Señor Solana said it was contradictory, at a time when modernisation was being consolidated in Latin America, "that two brother members of our community are confronting each other with violence and bloodshed".

## Abortion row for Clinton

Washington: President Clinton yesterday faced the prospect of an ugly clash with the Republican-controlled Congress after the White House acknowledged that his nominee for the vacant post of Surgeon-General had performed abortions (Martin Fletcher writes). Henry Foster, a Nashville obstetrician and gynaecologist, has a long association with Planned Parenthood, a national organisation that provides abortion counselling, and an inner-city Nashville programme that distributes condoms to prevent teenage pregnancies.

## Dead baby's father cleared

New York: A man who disconnected his 11-week premature baby from a respirator has been acquitted in Michigan of manslaughter. The baby, who weighed 1lb 11oz, died within minutes. Dr Gregory Messenger, a dermatologist, told the court that he unplugged the machine hours after the boy was born last year "out of love".

## Obstacles to office

Washington: A biography of President Clinton, *First in his Class* by David Maraniss, discloses that misgivings over extramarital affairs and his avoidance of the Vietnam draft prevented him from running for the White House before 1992. He is portrayed as a man with little personal discipline.

## Moose trap

North Pole, Alaska: When William Keith's lavatory became blocked he called in workmen to pump the septic tank — and found a moose. The half-ton animal had fallen down a 3ft hole in the sewer system and died. (AP)

## 'He's ranting, he's crazy', O. J. Simpson's ex-wife shouts on police tape

FROM GILES WHITTELL  
IN LOS ANGELES

FOR the first time since being selected last year, the jury at O. J. Simpson's murder trial heard chilling evidence of his apparently violent relationship with Nicole Brown Simpson, his former wife, when a taped emergency call she made eight months before her death was played in court in Los Angeles. "He's ranting and raving... he's

crazy," Brown Simpson was heard to say. In a second telephone call made minutes later, Brown Simpson, clearly terrified, told the police telephone operator: "He's back... He's O. J. Simpson: I think you know his record."

Describing an incident in October 1993 at her home as it took place, she was heard on the tape to tell the operator that Mr Simpson "broke the back door in and then he left and he came back". As the operator

urged her to stay on the line while waiting for the police to arrive, Brown Simpson added that Mr Simpson had forced his way upstairs to her bedroom and had demanded a telephone number before returning downstairs.

At that point a voice, apparently Mr Simpson's, was heard on the tape in the background, shouting obscenities at his former wife.

The taped encounter, first leaked to the media last year, is expected to

be used by the prosecution team to support its argument that Mr Simpson had a jealous, controlling and ultimately fatal obsession with Brown Simpson. Immediately after the tape was played to jurors late on Thursday, however, Johnnie Cochran, a defence lawyer, sought to limit its impact. Cross-examining the operator, who had been called as a prosecution witness and had given evidence that she had upgraded the incident to "life-threatening" while

talking to Brown Simpson, Mr Cochran established that Mr Simpson did not strike his former wife during the argument.

Earlier, the jury was shown letters written by Mr Simpson to his former wife and found after her death in a bank safe deposit box. In the letters, Mr Simpson acknowledged several separate incidents in which he had beaten his former wife and apologised for them.

Christopher Darden, for the prosecution, said that by storing the letters in the bank Brown Simpson "was leaving us a trail". The defence declined to offer an alternative explanation for the letters or for Brown Simpson's decision to store them in a safe deposit box, which was drilled open last year by the police.

Brown Simpson's sister, Denise, was expected to be called as a witness when the trial resumed late yesterday.

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James Pringle has found on his return to Peking that the dour city of the 1970s resembles an Asian New York

## Culture revolution transforms China

EVERY hour, the chimes on the railway station clock in Peking still ring out the revolutionary dirge that used to wake China at dawn during the Cultural Revolution. It is one of the vestiges of that period in the booming capital of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms.

Yesterday, on the Avenue of Eternal Peace that bisects the Chinese capital, a huge sound system was blasting out *Unchained Melody* from a display of flashing neon advertisements. In the old days, as part of the campaign to persuade Chinese to love labour, one would have had to have listened to *Down the Mountain Come the Manure Carriers*.

Last Saturday, I observed the opening of a new Peking disco. Girls in tiny leather shorts and with bare midriffs danced provocatively as a plump Chinese man sang reggae songs. During the Cultural Revolution, these girls' forebears were in pig-tails, had rosy cheeks and no make-

up and were wrapped up in padded coats.

I first heard the station clock chime when I arrived in Peking in 1971, after a 36-hour train journey from Canton, to reopen the Reuter news bureau after my predecessor, Anthony Grey, who had been held under house arrest in a small room for 26 months, was released. The Cultural Revolution was still on and was not formally to end until 1976, the year of Mao Tse-tung's death.

There were no flights from Hong Kong to Canton then, and it was necessary to walk across the iron bridge into Shenzhen, then a primitive village, now a boom town of illicit trade, karaoke and sex for sale.

Then there was a large red billboard at the halfway point of the bridge, where a People's Liberation Army soldier armed with an AK47 rifle peered disparagingly at my passport as if not believing there was a Chinese visa in it. The billboard read: "Down

with the US Imperialists and all their running dogs." I assumed I was included in the latter category.

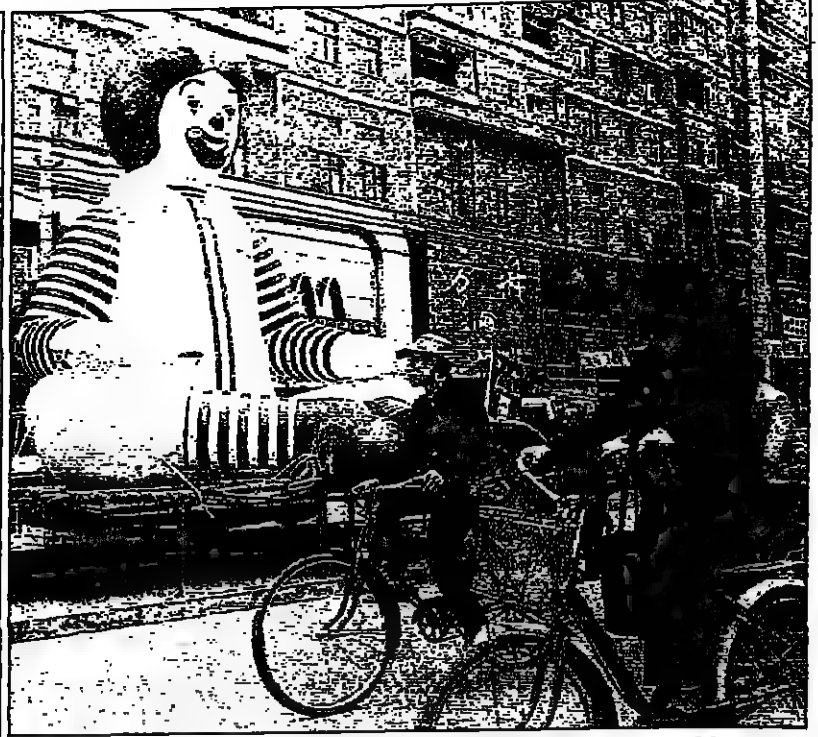
The next morning, when I woke in the East Wind Hotel in Canton, I looked out to see hundreds of people undergoing the rigours of regimented exercises.

Today, in Peking's Ritan Park, couples at a dawn operatic "altar of the sun" dance the tango to taped music. Old men swing their song birds, which were banned in the Cultural Revolution, in cages, while others practise Peking Opera. In the 1970s, only six revolutionary operas approved by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, were permitted, such as the *Red Detachment of Women*, about a group of Red Army women struggling against landlords on Hainan Island, off the coast of south China.

As China opens up, new art forms are flooding in, and some hidden pages of recent Chinese history are coming to light. In September 1971, for example, on leaving Hong



The image of Mao Tse-tung gazes down on his people in 1967. A giant inflated Ronald McDonald now dominates a street in Peking



Kong, I learnt that all planes in China had been grounded. On arrival in Peking, I noticed huge airworks all over town and discovered that finishing touches had just been made to the vast underground tunnel system to protect Peking from Soviet missile attack. It now

turns out that the week I arrived in China, Marshal Lin Biao, Mao's chosen successor, had apparently tried to overthrow the chairman, and when he failed, fled by plane towards the Soviet Union. The plane either ran out of fuel or was shot down by a Chinese

missile over Mongolia. Only now will Chinese officials admit that the hundreds of entrances to the 50ft-deep tunnels were opened after Marshal Lin's supposed coup attempt, because Mao feared an immediate nuclear attack from the Soviet Union. Now,

the tunnel system is home to the 1,001 Nights club inside the Great Wall, one of the capital's biggest pleasure domes. You can sing karaoke, have a massage, dance or play mahjong where once Peking's citizens were expected to survive during a nuclear war. There are also restaurants, hotels, shops and factories underground.

However, there has also been a rise in crime. You have to keep an eye on your possessions and watch your pockets on the underground train system. Foreigners are often a particular target. "I used to feel very safe in Peking," a Chinese official said the other day. "Now it's getting to be like New York."

In the past, foreigners were not allowed on the underground and were permitted to buy only two of the country's thousands of newspapers. Now there are dozens to choose from in Peking, many

of which are in English, Russian and Ukrainian. *demondaines* have returned to the bars and nightclubs of Shanghai, which in the 1960s and 1970s was China's most joyous city, the base of the Gang of Four.

The only Russian "invasion" these days is of thousands of traders who throng the Silk Road and Ritan market in Peking to buy Chinese clothes to sell in Russia, while up to 100,000 Chinese traders, many without papers, are settled around Moscow.

Beggars and panhandlers abound on Peking's streets, as do sellers of pirated CDs with songs by Madonna, the Sex Pistols and Pink Floyd.

Perhaps most importantly, Chinese people are prepared to talk to foreigners nowadays. Then, with only a dozen journalists in Peking, including those from Eastern Bloc countries, one had access at state banquets to China's lead-

office about 9pm each night to send a dispatch. My vehicle would often be the only one in the whole of central Peking and it would be an eerie feeling driving the deserted streets and squares. Now, as in other Asian capitals, there are massive traffic jams and

plenty of wandering night-owls. Few Chinese or foreigners mourn the passing of the era of the Cultural Revolution. In case of an attack of nostalgia, however, one can visit restaurants such as the Good Earth and Sunflower, which are festooned with old revolutionary posters, and join the ageing former Red Guards, most of whom are in business, in a chorus of such inspirational Maoist ditties as *Three Main Points of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention*.

The terrible excesses of the Red Guards are put on one side, replaced by a kind of ultra-radical chic version of the recent past based on selective memory.

"I went down to the countryside, and life was hard, but looking back I have fond memories too," said one Chinese diner at the Good Earth recently. "After all, we were young then — and the songs were good too."

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# Claims of Russian army corruption threaten Grachev

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S Defence Minister, General Pavel Grachev, came a step closer to dismissal yesterday after fresh allegations of corruption in the top ranks of the military.

General Grachev, who has come under intense public pressure to resign after his catastrophic campaign in Chechnya, went for "routine tests" at a military hospital several days ago, but has not been seen since. "The Defence Minister is still in hospital, that is all we can say on the matter," a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

In the latest attack against the beleaguered defence chief, the daily *Sverdlovskaya* newspaper claimed that General Grachev's "illness" was caused by his falling-out with President

Yeltsin at a meeting in the Kremlin on January 25. A front-page article said that the Russian leader had demanded to know details of a previously undisclosed £13 million bank account with Deutschebank opened in 1992 and held in the name of the Russian Defence Ministry.

The report of the secret account could destroy General Grachev's diminishing credibility. Last October, Dmitri Kholodov, a Russian reporter, was killed by a bomb in his office after investigating allegations of corruption involving General Grachev and the Western Army Group, formerly based in Germany.

Coupled with his disastrous handling of the campaign in Chechnya, General Grachev

appears to have strained to breaking point his relationship with Mr Yeltsin, the only defence he has left against the chorus of officers, newspaper columnists and politicians calling for his resignation.

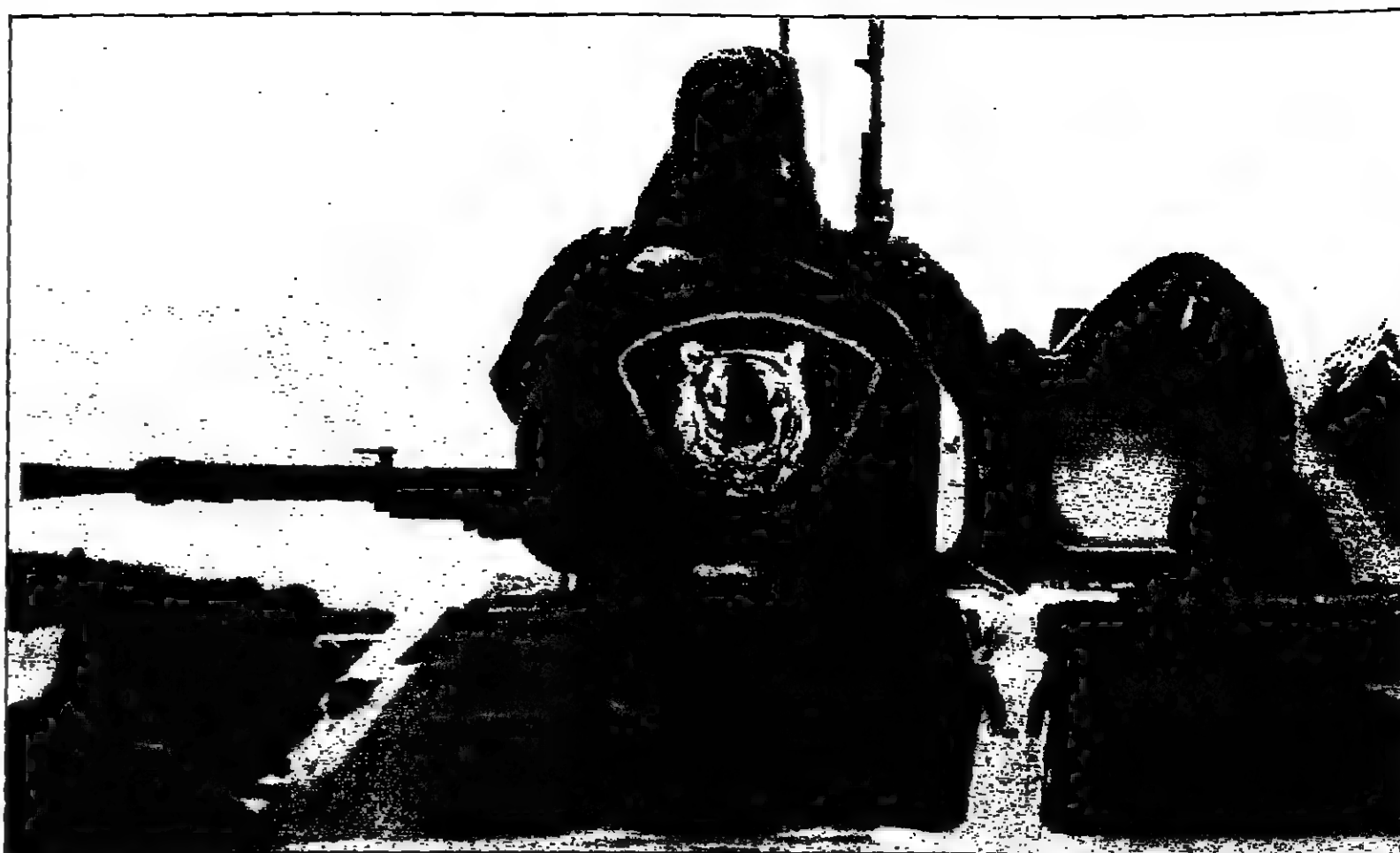
According to Western military sources, there are several candidates positioning themselves to contest the Defence Ministry portfolio once General Grachev is removed or resigns.

Colonel-General Mikhail Kolesnikov, the chief of the general staff, who yesterday presided over a meeting of the Defence Ministry's collegium in General Grachev's absence, has been tipped as a likely candidate. Another possible successor is General Andrei Nikolayev, the commander of the Border Guards, whose forces have done much of the fighting in Tajikistan.

Both men have remained largely silent in public about the Chechen operation and have thereby avoided becoming associated with either the "hawks" or the "doves" in the Government.

Reformist forces are likely to press Mr Yeltsin to appoint a civilian minister, who many believe would be better qualified to supervise the task of transforming the demoralised Russian military into a modern professional army.

While the debate over General Grachev's future is under way, there are also several key positions in the military to be filled since the sacking of three deputy ministers.



A Russian soldier peers from the hatch of his armoured carrier, bearing the tiger symbol, as he monitors a checkpoint near Grozny yesterday

## Inept strategy slows Yeltsin's war machine

FROM ANTHONY LOYD IN GROZNY

IT IS foolish to believe that courage alone is responsible for slowing significantly the Russian advance into Chechnya. Bravery has never been a match for the precise application of lethal weaponry and it is the blinding incompetence shown by the Russian military machine rather than the Chechens' spirit that is shaping the war.

The Chechen terrain is not the kind of mountain wilderness that is ideal for guerrilla resistance, like Afghanistan,

but a wide, saucer-shaped plain bordered by a thin band of mountains to the south. Such country naturally favours offensive operations by the armour-heavy Russians with their air support.

Yet the Russians have concentrated their efforts in urban areas, particularly Grozny, where limited fields of fire, inferior knowledge of routes, and the defensive suitability afforded by buildings and cellars undermines their firepower assets. Initial armoured

thrusts into Grozny, and more recently Samashki, have had predictably catastrophic results. Often using an amorphous blob of hastily-formed units with a high percentage of conscripts, these columns have advanced in linear formation into hostile built-up areas with little or no support from their infantry.

Here the armoured personnel carriers and tanks have been destroyed with ease by roving Chechen anti-tank units. Contrary to the inflated

reputation of the Russian armour on the T72 tank, it appears to be easily overwhelmed by rocket-propelled grenades fired at close quarters, while the Russian infantry have been killed in large numbers as they get out of their APCs in unfamiliar streets dominated by Chechen fighters.

The air war seems equally inept. The Chechens have no adequate weapons to counter supersonic jets. If Dzhokhar Dudayev, their leader, antici-

ated war, then in the three years since his bid for independence he made no effort to acquire American warplanes. President Yeltsin's jets fly as low as they please, while armoured attack helicopters have little more to fear than medium machine-gun rounds.

Other than their courage and belief in their cause, the Chechen fighters have many disadvantages. Successful guerrilla campaigns rely on superpower backing: the Chechens have none.

## Japan 'bid for Kuriles'

BY RICHARD BEESTON

JAPAN has secretly offered to pay billions of dollars to buy back the Kurile islands, north of its mainland, which were occupied by the Russians during the Second World War and never returned.

According to a new book by Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian Foreign Minister, Japanese officials have tried to negotiate the purchase of the islands during meetings with Kremlin officials over recent years. The book, soon to be released in Moscow, recounts how on at least two occasions, before

visits by former President Gorbachev in 1991 and President Yeltsin in 1993, representatives of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party suggested that they would pay \$28 billion (£18 billion) for the islands.

Japan insists that the islands were seized illegally at the end of the war. Russia's refusal to negotiate over the status of the Kuriles has been the main obstacle preventing massive Japanese economic investment and assistance for Moscow.

## Opposition leader promises to break Belorussia's links with Moscow

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE  
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT



Pozniak: Minsk must be ready for Russian siege

**BELORUSSIA** will risk Russia's wrath and sever ties with Moscow if the opposition Popular Front wins elections on May 14, Zianon Pozniak, the front's leader, said.

"We need to break from Russia... a criminal, bureaucratic state," said Mr Pozniak, whose party is believed to be gaining popularity and who is in London meeting MPs, police and education officials at the

Government's invitation. Minsk, the Belorussian capital, is capital of the Commonwealth of Independent States — the loose economic and security group comprising all the former Soviet republics except the Baltic states — and Mr Pozniak promised to take his country out of the CIS if he wins.

"We have to prepare for a siege by Russia," he said. "I know for sure that Russia would consider invading Belorussia. All telecommunications, roads and railroads from

Russia to the West go via Belorussia. We also have an important nuclear early-warning radar system," he said.

The elections will be the first parliamentary poll in Belorussia since the country declared independence from the Soviet Union in August 1991. They will be a key in helping to decide whether the country develops a market-reform economy, or reinforces cultural ties with Moscow. Parliament has been dominated by communists, but some

observers believe that the Popular Front is gaining ground in traditional communist strongholds in the countryside.

In what may be a sign that President Yeltsin is concerned about the prospect of a Popular Front victory, the Russian leader is to lead a delegation to Belorussia this month to sign a new friendship agreement with President Lukashenko, who was elected last July. Mr Lukashenko this week called for a referendum, to be held

at the same time as the parliamentary elections, to decide whether the old Soviet symbols should be reinstated on the nation's flag and whether Russian should rank alongside Belorussian as a national language.

Mr Pozniak said: "The chances of Russia becoming a democratic state are bleak. The impoverishment of the people makes the Government look for an external enemy, such as Chechnya. It is like Afghanistan again: they have imperialistic inten-

tions. The Popular Front hopes to build a democratic state, regarded as mature and along the lines of those in Western Europe."

The opposition leader believes, however, that Minsk will not become another Grozny. "I know our nation and our people, we are not violent by nature."

"Yeltsin got where he is by slogans," Mr Pozniak said. "He is an old party communist and has the old mentality. He is good at leading from the top of a tank."

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Twenty years after John Birt's mission-to-explain article in *The Times* he returns to the theme with a critique of modern broadcasting

In the 1960s and 1970s politicians rarely appeared in interviews on television or radio. Live broadcasting of news occasions was rare. There was, of course, no broadcast access to Parliament.

Now there is an open and constant political debate, sometimes developing from bulletin to bulletin. Today's politicians have to be fast on the draw.

Great dramas no longer play out behind closed doors, but right in front of the electorate. Who can forget Geoffrey Howe's dramatic resignation speech before a volatile House of Commons in 1990?

A strong feeling has developed on the part of the public that it has the right to understand what is happening in government and public institutions. There is a strong public sentiment that there should be no unnecessary secrets. The courts reflect this mood with a new readiness to conduct judicial reviews of government decisions as a check that our politicians are acting within the law.

Although much information about how the public interest is discharged is still hidden,

no ministers or public officials can feel any longer that the background to controversial decisions is likely now to remain a secret. There is less stale air in our institutions than there was 20 years ago. The searchlight shines into most, if not

all, corners. But adverse consequences arise: in particular, there may be too much disputation and too little reflection in our public life.

Disputation has always been an integral part of British culture and society. Wicked satire, puncturing the pompous and the powerful, has been with us since Aristophanes attacked demagogues. Hogarth, Swift and Shaw all knew how to dip their pens into acid.

But alongside this long tradition of vigorous disputation, there has been another tradition — of reflection; of analytical discussion; and of the painstaking development of policy. The fear must be that the balance is swinging towards disputation and away from reflection.

The media resounds with acrimony, allegations of incompetence, demands for resignation. Rivalry between politicians, or differences within parties, are played out as a national soap opera.

Sometimes the press, broadcasting and Parliament combine in a feeding frenzy in which it is difficult

to exercise cool and measured judgment.

Most importantly, the issues that lead themselves to tabloid headlines, or to a studio argy-bargy, crowd out discussion of the events and circumstances that will have a lasting impact on our lives.

Of course, serious work is still being conducted in government and among opposition policy thinkers. But I think it is reasonable to suggest that less of it is being conducted.

It is not surprising that research shows the public dissatisfaction emerges from the picture of politics that is distasteful for what is seen by our viewers and listeners of politicians behaving badly.

The role of the media is an honourable one. Vigorous media expose corruption and incompetence, puncture complacency, unveil new ideas and notions, increase the creativity, vitality and dynamism of society. But there needs to be a corresponding sense of responsibility. Broadcasters need to en-



John Birt: acrimonious media

sure that there is a proper balance between politics and policy in our coverage. Of course, we must offer a proper opportunity for politicians to debate when there's a truly meaty policy issue between them. But we must beware the ritualistic encounter — which is little more

than a brief opportunity to bicker. Such encounters generally add little of substance to general understanding and irritate our audiences, who can always spot when they are learning nothing new.

Second, broadcasters need to ensure that we address long-term as well as short-term issues.

Third, audiences will always enjoy learning about political personalities and rivalries. But let us not give these matters more weight than they are due.

Fourth, we in the media have, as I have described, a vital democratic role, but let us not forget that there is no higher democratic legitimacy than Parliament's. We can and should rigorously challenge politicians; but we should also remember that individual MPs and parties have stood before the public and have been elected by them, which we have not. Politicians have a higher claim to speak for the people than journalists.

Some journalists, sometimes, forget that. Reporters who pretend that answers and remedies are

obvious; that everyone in the world but them is an incompetent fool; overbearing interviewers who sneer disdainfully at their interviewees; the sub who composes a crass and unfair headline; the columnist at his or her desk pontificating arrogantly — they all exhibit attitudes which are unattractive in a journalist, and rarely appropriate.

Journalism which recognised achievement as well as shortcomings; which accepted that all options present their difficulties; which tested dissent and established opinion with equal rigour; which recognised the world as a difficult, complex place would be better journalism.

For journalism is not an end in itself: it is a means to an end. So, fifth, we need to re-assert that journalism's highest purpose is to inform the citizenry about the events and forces which most shape their lives.

Sixth, we must strive for high standards in our journalism too.

Accuracy should be sacrosanct. We must resist the gradual drift towards reporting speculation and gossip alongside provable fact.

We should reassert the value of journalists being fair and open-minded. A journalist should appreciate and weigh all sides of an argument before reporting on it.

Journalists must beware of hyping the artificial. A politician hints at a policy difference with colleagues. Responses are sought, from opposition and others. On a weak news day, the story is headlined. In subsequent bulletins and editions, senior figures come to the defence of their colleague. A crisis blows up from nowhere, like a tornado.

We in broadcasting should beware of interviewers who feel more self-important than the subject matter in hand; who like the disorientating opening question — the rabbit-punch — designed to knock off balance.

Modern media are, for the most part, overwhelmingly a force for good. They open up the democratic process. They expose politicians, policies and institutions to intense and questioning scrutiny. There has been great progress in the media in the past 30 years. To the extent that, in some measure, the modern media are a force for ill, the remedies are in our own hands.

The author is Director General of the BBC.

## The public knows best on Europe

On Tuesday, *The Times* published an important article recording the Prime Minister's so-called conversion to Euro-scepticism. I still think myself as a good party man, so I describe it as a re-emphasis of his views. No more than a restatement of his article in *The Economist* on Europe and his more recent speech at Leiden.

If there is any lesson or theme to be drawn from the events since November 28, when eight of us were kicked out of the party, it is the importance that the Prime Minister attaches to party opinion and the extent to which it has become Euro-sceptic.

The mood of the parliamentary party responds to constituency pressures.

There never was any resentment towards those of us who lost the whip. From the first day after our expulsion, colleagues have been coming up to me and others saying: "We want you back as soon as possible."

Up until Christmas, the Government tried to crush us. On December 11, the PM described the rebels without exception as self-indulgent. Then, on December 15, we lost the Dudley West by-election. It was said to be the fault of the rebels.

The same line was continued in the PM's new year letter to Conservative constituency chairmen.

Our chairmen then received letters from fellow chairmen suggesting we should be disciplined. But so far our constituencies have continued to support their members. I suggest that prominent members of Conservative associations are often better guides to public opinion than ministers.

The correspondence which we have received has shown remarkable support for Euro-scepticism. We hitherto pretty obscure backbenchers have been deluged with mail from outside our constituencies.

Tony Marlow's outside mail

has been running at about 200 a week. Richard Shepherd finds that 500-600 people have written to him from outside. Teddy Taylor had 421 outside letters on the three days of January 26, 27 and 30.

I suppose that Teresa Gorman is our media star. Leaving aside her personality, she has campaigned on Europe. When the *Today* programme organised a vote for the personality of 1994, the results were: 1. Roy Castle; 2. John Major; 3. Nelson Mandela; 4. Tony Blair; 5. Teresa Gorman.

Teresa is now a month behind on her mail and is getting about 700 outside letters a week. Almost all of them support her on Europe.

By chance, last week I happened to be walking from the House of Commons to the BBC premises at Millbank. A young lady whom I have never met before came up and spoke to me and said that she worked at Conservative Central Office. She said that they were inundated with letters in support of the Euro-sceptics.

On January 8, the self-indulgent losers of by-elections and wreckers of party unity were spoken of in very different terms by the Prime Minister. We were "very blue Conservatives indeed in the sense of being very true blue to the hawkish wing of the Conservative Party".

British public opinion has had enough. On one issue after another, we see the practical problems of loss of sovereignty. In each instance, the people call for a looser relationship with Europe. The British people want a choice between the great parties.

There is, as this paper showed on Tuesday, every chance that they will get a chance from the Tories. It could be a winner.

NICK BUDGEN

The author is Tory MP for Wolverhampton South West

In every instance, the people want looser ties with Brussels

## The pug and the dilettante

By excluding Hogarth from its show, the Royal Academy has done just what the champion of England would have expected

The Eurofanatics have won a triumph. At the Royal Academy this week is an exhibition that must be viewed with suspicion. The public is served a dish of ossa bucca with no trace of good English meat. "Lord Burlington, His Villa and Garden at Chiswick" is a eulogy of this wealthy showman architect, yet makes no mention of his enemy and neighbour at Chiswick, William Hogarth. Burlington without Hogarth is like Gilbert without Sullivan, Marks without Spencer. To elevate a frigid aristocrat and censor his chauvinist critic is to take sides with a vengeance. Euro-sceptics must clearly be on their guard.

First let us travel to London's western gateway, our Arc de Triomphe or Statue of Liberty. It is the Hogarth Roundabout at Chiswick, monument to the unknown road engineer. The maelstrom separates the M4 approach from the striding M3 at what was once the Cherry Blossom Polish factory. When the factory was demolished in the 1980s a civilised city would have cleared the site and opened up a distant vista of Chiswick House beyond. Instead, an office block was built. The palace built by Burlington and his friends after their Grand Tour in 1715 is glimpsed only by bearing left at the roundabout and peering through the trees.

More important is what lies to the right. Hard under the old factory wall at the start of the M4 is a small redbrick house abutting directly onto the road. Its oriel window gazes down on the millions hurtling to and from Heathrow. This is the house Hogarth bought in 1749, a decade after Burlington had completed his villa next door. While the latter oozes wealth and serenity, Hogarth House sits askew its site, forlorn, awkward and a thorough nuisance to worshippers of the great god Road.

Hogarth hated everything that Burlington stood for. Why he moved in next door to him in what were then open fields is a mystery. Both he and Burlington were already in their 50s, but Hogarth had lost none of his venom. As he watched the grandees trundle past his gate, he must have

been in a frenzy, abusing them as traitors to their culture, foreigners, pagans, opera-lovers, worst of all, Italians. He could not believe that these painted gods held in their hands the fate of Shakespeare's England. What was to become of Milton, Wren, Congreve, beef, beer and the Tories?

When Burlington returned from Europe at the age of 20, he brought with him 878 pieces of luggage, an obsession with Italian architecture and the patronage of the new Hanoverian monarchs. Within a year he was Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire and Lord High Treasurer of Ireland. He sacked the great James Gibbs as architect of Burlington House in London. Wren and Hawksmoor were ousted from court commissions. English baroque was

declared dead. Burlington had also brought from Rome an Italianised Yorkshire painter and designer, "Signior" William Kent, who stayed with Burlington all his life. The young man replaced the history painter James Thornhill at court. John Gay and Alexander Pope, who both enjoyed Burlington's patronage, duly acclaimed Kent as the equal of Raphael. The interiors at Chiswick are his masterpiece.

Meanwhile, Hogarth was making a name and healthy income as an engraver. He was exuberant and talkative but wholly without tact. He loathed the smooth, fat and florid Kent and the Burlington retinue of "imitators and mannerists". Hogarth never went to Italy. When he once visited France he ridiculed everything he saw at the top of his voice, and was finally arrested and deported as a spy. French houses were "all gilt and beshit". He used his narrative paintings — *A Rake's Progress*, *A Harlot's Progress*, *Marriage à la Mode*, *An Election* — to maintain a ceaseless war on the aesthetic and moral corruption that "foreigners" were bringing to England. Immorality and debauchery always took place against a Palladian backdrop. Few of his prints failed to taunt Burlington and Kent. They were immensely popular.

It is hard not to side with Hogarth, Thornhill at court. John Gay and Alexander Pope, who both enjoyed Burlington's patronage, duly acclaimed Kent as the equal of Raphael. The interiors at Chiswick are his masterpiece. Meanwhile, Hogarth was making a name and healthy income as an engraver. He was exuberant and talkative but wholly without tact. He loathed the smooth, fat and florid Kent and the Burlington retinue of "imitators and mannerists". Hogarth never went to Italy. When he once visited France he ridiculed everything he saw at the top of his voice, and was finally arrested and deported as a spy. French houses were "all gilt and beshit". He used his narrative paintings — *A Rake's Progress*, *A Harlot's Progress*, *Marriage à la Mode*, *An Election* — to maintain a ceaseless war on the aesthetic and moral corruption that "foreigners" were bringing to England. Immorality and debauchery always took place against a Palladian backdrop. Few of his prints failed to taunt Burlington and Kent. They were immensely popular.



Marriage à la Mode II (shortly after the marriage) — Hogarth's satire on fashionable alliances

"the common sense English pug", against the effete Burlingtonians. By excluding him from his show, the Royal Academy has done just what he would have expected. The walls of the exhibition are filled with exquisite prints of obelisks, columns and rustic arches, the sleek Modernism of the age of the Grand Tour. At this week's private view, I watched today's neo-Palladians tiptoeing from picture to picture, lips pursed in admiration. I longed for the little round man, his good god Trump at his heels, to come charging through the gallery, bellowing, "Out of my sight, you starveling Pansies. Out, you godless Romans with your set squares, opera singers, porticoes and painted faces. Make way for the Roast Beef of Old England! Come back Wren, Gibbs, spires, steeples, the Line of Beauty, the Church of England!"

To Hogarth the entire West End, in which Burlington's London house (the present Royal Academy) was situated, was a sign of iniquity. It was nothing but Whigs, prostitutes and Papists. Honest men lived in the City of London. As for Italian art, it was

"dead Christs, holy families, Madonnas and dismal, dark objects". If people wanted to consort with a foreigner, what was wrong with Rembrandt?

Hogarth had some allies. He had Fielding and Garrick. He had the governors of Bart's Hospital, whose staircase he offered to decorate free rather than see the commission go to a foreigner named Amigoni. He had his membership of the xenophobic Beefeater Club. But his talent was to madden. He antagonised not just the cultural grandees of early Georgian England but also men of sound judgment such as Reynolds and Dr Johnson. He opposed the new Royal Academy as Frenchified cultural dictatorship.

The politician John Wilkes began as a natural friend, but when he joined the war party he too was selected for caricature, his face cruelly distorted. He accused Hogarth of having a "rare talent for gibbeting in colours". Like many talented men, Hogarth craved company but found

its compromises intolerable. He loved to attack but hated being attacked. When Wilkes finally savaged him, he wailed that such treatment "could not but hurt a feeling mind".

Hogarth was by then ageing. He retreated to Chiswick, where Burlington's parterres were now spreading on all sides. His last print was of Father Time expiring, a church in ruins, his pipe, pallet and blunderbuss broken and the whole world at a crazy angle. England was going to the dogs, carried by a cartload of foreigners who could only imitate antiquity. They had no feel for the glorious diversity of English art. Hogarth is buried, like Burlington, in Chiswick Church. Burlington is inside in a classical tomb, Hogarth lies under the stars.

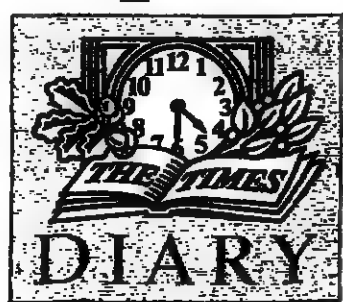
What fun the Academy could have had with this battle. Instead, the patron saint of cultural chauvinism is ignored, left alone in his brick box by the M4. Someone should erect a placard for incoming visitors: Here Lived Hogarth — You are in England!

## Great escapism

THE THREE prisoners who broke out of Parkhurst at the beginning of January are still dining out on their escapade. Keith Rose, who is serving a life sentence for murder, has written to the BBC requesting a tape of a recent edition of Radio 4's comedy programme *Weekending*, which featured jokes about the breakout.

Rose, 45, whose haircut has a touch of the Bobby Charlton scrappower, is desperate to hear what it said. "I understand that, following the escape of myself and two others from Parkhurst, that week's edition of *Weekending* was an absolute classic," he writes. "As the three of us missed that edition — we were rather busy with other things — please, please send us a tape."

Garth Edwards, the producer of *Weekending*, is flattered and has obliged. "It's a very popular programme with prisoners. They are a captive audience. It's good escapism for them. We don't normally do this kind of thing, but we made an exception in this case — it's only fair, they've given us more than enough material."



The tape is full of dubious gags such as the tips on how to guarantee your prison stays in the news — hold ladder-building carpentry classes. The Prison Service is relaxed about letting the prisoners have the tape. "We're only worried about things that are dangerous in terms of security. I don't think this counts."

### Lucky punt

IF THERE is an extra spring in the step of the Scottish rugby captain Gavin Hastings when he runs on

to the pitch to play Ireland at Murrayfield today, it can be put down to a rum around in his fortunes. He won top prize — a weekend for two at Glenaeles — in a Burns Night raffle at an Edinburgh hotel where he was guest of honour.

### Egg flip

THE STRANGEST of literary groupies are expected in London this autumn when the Royal Society of Literature holds an auction at Sotheby's to raise money for the renovation of a Somerset cottage to be used as a writers' retreat.

Some peculiar items, including John Mortimer's legal wig, have arrived at the society's London headquarters for the auction. The strangest lot so far is a soiled jersey owned by two poets in succession: Edmund Blunden and Dylan Thomas. Victoria Glendinning, who is organising the auction, says: "It's got some egg stains. We're not sure whose they are."

● The PC tippie has arrived. Kettner's restaurant in Soho offers on its wine list a Napa Valley Chardonnay "noted for its crisp taste and political correctness" at £18.50 a bottle. "Bottled in recy-

clad glass; there is no lead on the top as the cork is sealed with beeswax; it is fermented in new French oak. And even the label is edible."

### Gum ho!

EYEBROWS shot skywards at *The Oldie* magazine's lunch at Simpson's-in-the-Strand yesterday. Spike Milligan was named *Oldie* of the Year and the loudest applause came when Terry Majors (Big Brother of the Year) sat down after an interminable



speech. But the extraction of Lord Healey's teeth caused the greatest stir.

He complained that journalists always interrupt him at inconvenient moments. "I've usually just taken my teeth out and am sitting with my feet up when the phone goes," he explained.

"So I can't speak properly." He then proceeded to grapple with his dentures, eventually tearing them free and brandishing them proudly aloft with a gummy grin.

Teeth trouble is not, however, the reason why he has been so quiet on the Lords' benches of late. "It's the House of the living dead and some of them aren't living. I don't speak very often because I only speak about issues I'm interested in," he said.

### Royal circus

THE PRINCE of Wales caused consternation in the stalls at the Royal Opera House in London when he arrived for the premiere of Walton's *Troilus and Cressida* this week. Instead of sitting in the Royal Box (bad sight line), he plumped for the front row of the Royal Circle.

It meant some people in the stalls could not see when the Prince

### At home with the Howards?

MY NOTE this week about the middle-aged modelling activities of the Home Secretary's wife, Sandra Howard, prompted a reader to send in a January catalogue from a mail order company.



Home Free offers an eclectic range of goods including bra-extenders, a vibrating hairbrush and gardening tights for men (the mind boggles). Pictures of Mrs Howard feature throughout the catalogue. She is always smiling. Directly underneath an advertisement for Incontinence Pants, she models some Set 'N' Dry rollers and a Quick-Dry hood (see pictures right and left) fashioned of "flexible, heat-retaining material". Her demure looks are flanked by some Staycup Bust Supports at £9.95 for two, and by an uncomfortable-looking pair of Safety Hernia Pads. On another page, she sports It's A Wrap, the hair towel that stays put — a snip at £8.95.

trumpets heralded the start of the National Anthem. "Absolute chaos," muttered an opera buff in the gods. "It looked like a Mexican wave of aristocrats. The chap should sit where he's meant to."

P.H.S

John Major 1995















## NEWS

## Major toughens single currency line

■ Britain is to set new conditions for joining a European single currency beyond those in the Maastricht treaty, John Major announced. At the same time the Prime Minister made plain that he is to resist the demands of the Euro-sceptics that he close off the option of joining a single currency at some time in the future, possibly as early as 1999. Pages 1, 16

## Peers accused of 'cash for questions'

■ The House of Lords was embroiled in the cash-for-questions controversy last night after a senior peer accused colleagues of taking "substantial sums" as payment for putting questions to ministers. Four peers were said to have failed to declare cash payments and other benefits. Page 1

## Protestors held

More than 40 people were arrested, including the father and sister of the animal rights protester who died earlier this week, as the airlift resumed. Pages 1, 5

## Rugby record

Touts were demanding a record £700 a pair for tickets for England v France. Pages 1, 40

## Terrorists freed

The Irish Prime Minister urged Britain to release its share of terrorist prisoners after Dublin freed five IRA inmates. Page 2

## Snow trap

Two women were spending a second night on Ben Nevis after a rescue operation was called off because of the bad weather. Page 3

## Bill for pilots

Two hundred former Dan-Air pilots will have to pay another £75,000 in legal fees before they learn how much compensation they are entitled to receive. Page 6

## British astronaut boldly goes into orbit

■ The man who will become the first Briton to walk in space blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida, amid fears that a sudden leak in a steering thruster could threaten the space shuttle *Discovery's* mission. Page 1

## Police to sue

Twenty-three police officers are to sue their force in connection with stress caused by the Hillsborough disaster. Page 9

## Victory for Howard

Michael Howard won a test case reversing a decision that could have freed hundreds of people seeking asylum. Page 10

## Electoral saviour

French Socialists are due to appoint a presidential candidate whose main task will be to save them from electoral disaster. Page 11

## Trade war looms

America is to announce the toughest punitive trade sanctions to stop rampant Chinese piracy of music, films and software. Page 13

## Corruption crisis

Russia's Defence Minister came a step closer to dismissal after new allegations of top-rank military corruption. Page 15



Spike Milligan yesterday after being named Oldie of the Year. He was chosen for the award, from the *Oldie* magazine, after calling the Prince of Wales a "little grovelling bastard" at the British Comedy Awards

## OPINION

**Stress on the beat:** Should police officers (and firemen, soldiers, nurses and ambulance workers) be entitled to make claims for damages for stress in the manner of ordinary citizens? Page 17

**Selective argument:** It would be said if Oxford squandered its entry system for such ill-conceived reasons. Page 17

**They can't wait:** The death of the can-can is as shocking news as the French travelling to today's rugby international were to express appreciation of Twickenham's set menu of grey onions in buns. Page 17

**Future of Northern Ireland:** walking in the Lake District: attack on banks. Page 17

## COLUMNS

**Simon Jenkins:** The Euro-fanatics have won a triumph. At the Royal Academy this week is an exhibition that must be viewed with suspicion. Page 16

**John Birt:** We in broadcasting should beware of interviewers who feel more self-important than the subject-matter: who like the disorientating opening question — the rabbit punch — designed to knock off balance. The result is often a battle of wits going nowhere. Page 16

**THE PAPERS:** The Chinese authorities need to see proof that real penalties follow persistent violations of international law. — *The Washington Post*

**OBITUARIES:** William Heaps, newspaper executive; Francois Boutin, racehorse trainer; Sir Cennard Traherne, former Lord Lieutenant. Page 19

## BUSINESS

**Economy:** demand for private credit soared in December as consumers flocked to buy household goods and "big ticket" items such as cars, vindicating Thursday's base-rate rise. Page 21

**Elam:** Shares in the fashion retailer dropped 18p to 183p as it said that operating profits for 1994 would be below the previous year. Page 22

**Markets:** the FT-SE 100 index rose 25.0 points to close at 3059.7. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 79.8 to 79.1. Page 24

**CAR 95:** Land-speed challenge: the man who will try to smash the sound barrier. Pages 1, 3

## SPORT

**Motor racing:** Nigel Mansell has signed a contract, believed to be worth £7 million, with McLaren. Page 35

**Crickets:** England dropped Michael Slater three times as Australia moved to 283 for four on the opening day of the fifth Test. Page 40

**Golf:** Nick Faldo, back to form after two poor tournaments in Arizona, scored 66 in the first round of the Pebble Beach Pro-am, leaving him only one behind the leader. Page 39

**WEEKEND ARTS**

## SATURDAY TIMES

Instant opera: Operavox offers you *Carmen* — in 30 minutes. Page 3  
High society: the BBC version of Edith Wharton's *The Buccaneers*. Page 5  
Screen dance: modern dance made for TV. Page 6

## WEEKEND

**Violent nights:** one man tells how he was mugged in the centre of Cambridge by five drunken yobs. Pages 3, 10, 11  
**Shopping:** inspired ideas for Valentine's Day. Page 13  
**Going underground:** visiting a couple who live in a concrete water tank. Page 17  
**Gardening:** How new ideas from Germany could revolutionise the way we plant our borders: splashes of winter cheer; a journey through time: gardens to visit this weekend. Pages 3, 10, 11  
**Travel:** The hidden gems of Catalonia: magical Portmerion; specialist breaks; skiing for women; and a cultural waltz down the green Danube. Page 22-27

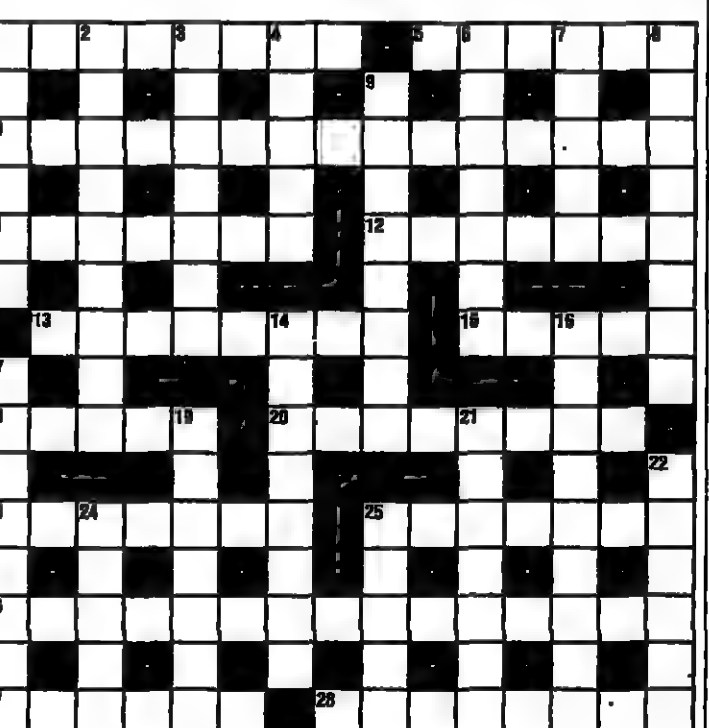
## WEEKEND ARTS

**Thacker's Miller:** the British director David Thacker explains his affinity with Arthur Miller, the American playwright, which bears fruit in his production of *A View From the Bridge*. Page 5  
**"Victim art":** the New York arts world is in uproar over a dance-work that includes a video of people dying of AIDS-related disease. Page 5  
**Roses all the way:** as Covent Garden revives its production of *Der Rosenkavalier* tonight, virtually the same cast can be heard on a video of a production at the Vienna State Opera. Page 6  
**New on CD:** Richard Thompson is honoured by a tribute album that does not quite come off. Page 7

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,770

A bottle of Knockando, a superb Speyside Single Malt Scotch whisky uniquely bottled only when at its peak of perfection rather than at a pre-determined age, together with a fine leather credit card wallet, will be given for the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



## ACROSS

- In France, an offer to study without being asked (8)
- Student leaves African republic for a place in Europe (6)
- One gossips finally of freedom, say, and the gossips (15)
- Some find the Kirk so mean (7)
- Cretans danced in states of ecstasy (7)
- It's familiar to male cyclists and peevish lawyers (8)
- Put off, but dined again on the way back (5)
- It sounds when detectives retire (5)
- Girl played cricket halfheartedly but just as vigorously (8)
- Container holding 60% of the drink in the ship's kitchen (7)
- A beautiful girl, but so destructive (7)
- Where hill-dwellers may go for a match? Absolutely (4,2,3,6)
- It's bound to arise (6)
- Rip 'em out before the first performance (8)

## DOWN

- Biased female abandons terrible ruffian (6)

Solution to Puzzle No 19,764

**LIPSTICK PILLER**  
O E D S O E  
W A R D E R S F I G U R I N  
B U N M E G E  
O A S I S O N A S T R I N G  
V E T P L A V A  
G O T O O N E S H E A  
D N S I U T N E  
I N T E R I O R I T U R E  
S A I T A M F  
P A K I S T A N I T H E I R  
A E U N T A R U  
T R O W L S I N G S O N A  
C U D O E I A  
H A T R E D I N I M I C A L

Solution to Puzzle No 19,769

**WALLFLOWER ACES**  
I T E P X I T  
S U B S T I T U T E J A V A  
H S E I E O R B  
G U A T M A R S U P I A L  
B O H I T A O E  
R O W D I E S T P R O T E M  
A N E I T A  
S T A L K Y R E L E V A N T  
S T I L H E R G E  
T A K I N G O F F S E I H  
A W G N O T A M  
C H A T J O U R N A L I S E  
K R I U C R O S  
S O D A G R E E N F I N C H

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: N Twickel, London; D M Macarthur, Bristol; C Berman, London; J Elliott, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian; D L Kavanagh, Newmarket, Suffolk.

## TIMES WEATHERCAST

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0800 1000 followed by the code.

Region	Forecast
Greater London	701
Kent/Surrey/Sussex	702
Devon & Cornwall	703
Wiltshire/Dorset	704
Wiltshire/Dorset	705
Wiltshire/Dorset	706
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Wiltshire/Dorset	728
Wiltshire/Dorset	729
Wiltshire/Dorset	730

Weathercast is charged at 39p per minute (plus VAT) and 49p per minute at all other times.

## ROADWATCH

For the latest A1 traffic roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0333 401 followed by the code.

Location	Forecast
London & SE	731
London & SE	732
London & SE	733
London & SE	734
London & SE	735
London & SE	736
London & SE	737
London & SE	738
London & SE	739
London & SE	740
London & SE	741
London & SE	742
London & SE	743
London & SE	744
London & SE	745
London & SE	746
London & SE	747
London & SE	748
London & SE	749
London & SE	750

## HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 7.35 am Sun sets: 4.55 pm  
Moon sets: 10.45 pm Moon rises: 8.08 am

First quarter February 7

London 6.55 pm to 7.33 am  
Bristol 6.55 pm to 7.43 am  
Edinburgh 6.55 pm to 8.01 am  
Manchester 6.55 pm to 7.48 am  
Perthshire 6.55 pm to 7.51 am

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## FORECAST

General: England and Wales will have a mainly dry, bright day with some sunshine, mainly in the north. Cloud will thicken from the southwest later in the afternoon and evening and outbreaks of drizzle, with fog on hills and the coast, will spread northeast across southwest England and Wales, Northern Ireland and southern Scotland will start cloudy but should have a mainly dry day. Northern Scotland will have a showery day, with most of the showers in the west and north and the best of the sunshine in the east. Everywhere will be very mild and winds will be lighter than recently.

London, SE England, Central S England, S Wales: mainly dry but cloudy. Brighter in the afternoon. Wind southwest light. Max 12C (54F).

E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, N Wales, NW England, Central N: dry with some

sunshine. Wind southwest light. Max 13C (55F).

Channel Isles, SW England: cloudy with drizzle and coastal fog. Wind southwest light. Max 12C (54F).

Lake District, Isle of Man, NE England, Borders, SW Scotland, Northern Ireland: rather cloudy. Occasional showers. Wind southwest light. Max 12C (54F).

Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth: dry with some sunshine. Wind west moderate. Max 11C (52F).

Glasgow, Central Highlands, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: rather cloudy and showery. Wind west fresh. Max 10C (50F).

Outlook: mild and mostly dry, although there will be a little rain in places.

AROUND BRITAIN

4 pm to 6 pm: b = bright; c = cloudy; d = drizzle; ds = dust storm; du = dust; f = fog; g = gale; h = hail; m = mist; sh = shower; s = sun; t = thick; w = wind; x = variable; y = rain; z = snow.

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# THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 1995

Widows unlikely to  
share Lloyds £10m

## C&G Bill killed off by Labour MPs

By ROBERT MILLER

LABOUR MPs yesterday "shouted down" a Private Member's Bill introduced to give thousands of widows a share in a £10 million bonus payout from the proposed takeover of the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society by Lloyds Bank.

The failure of the Bill, introduced by Douglas French, Conservative MP for Gloucester, also has implications for widows and divorcees involved in the much larger merger between the Halifax and Leeds Permanent building societies.

Mr French had hoped that his Building Societies (Joint Account Holders) Bill would pass its second reading yesterday and become law before the critical "vesting" date of August 1 when the C&G takeover is due to be completed.

Earlier this week, the C&G said Lloyds had agreed to add £10 million for widows, on top of the £1.8 billion for C&G members who did qualify for a share in the society's assets. C&G said last night: "We are very disappointed, but we can't do anything unless the law is changed."

Mr French had cross-party support for his Bill. A letter from Alistair Darling, Labour's City affairs spokesman, written on Thursday, said: "We've done all we can to ensure that your Bill goes

through all its stages tomorrow. Our Whips know the position and we have spoken to all those who might object."

Mr French said yesterday: "Around 10 Labour MPs shouted 'object' [effectively killing the Bill]."

But Mr Darling said: "There is still a lot of bitterness in the party over the way the Government wrecked the Disabled Persons Bill last year and this has spilled over into this session. Yesterday, two Conservative MPs talked out a Bill that would have prevented the export of live animals. In that atmosphere it is hardly surprising that Mr French's Bill did not get through."

"Mr French's Bill should never have been a Private Member's Bill in the first place. I will be writing to the Treasury saying that if the Government is prepared to take this Bill on its own time we will make sure that it goes through in half a day, or whatever else is necessary to put it on the statute book."

Realistically the chances of C&G widows, and possibly those with the Halifax and the Leeds, receiving a payout are rapidly diminishing. The Halifax said: "We are still looking for some way of alleviating this problem. It is now up to the Government."

The Treasury is expected to publish the results of its review of the Building Societies Act 1986 before the end of the month. Within the proposals it is understood that there are amendments to the present Act which are broadly in line with those in Mr French's Bill. But at present there is no Parliamentary time for the amendments to be pushed through in time for the C&G's vesting day.

The only hope for widows, divorcees and others who have been excluded under the terms of the Act from sharing in any bonus payouts arising from a merger, takeover or stock market flotation is if the Cabinet committee allocates Parliamentary time to it. Next week both C&G will unveil its annual results. Rob Thomas, building societies analyst at UBS, the stockbroker, forecasts that pre-tax profits will rise to £250 million (£202 million). The bad debt provision will be down to £50 million (£76 million).

Mr Thomas added: "The C&G is in an interesting position over the Lloyds takeover. If the profits are significantly above the £250 million barrier some of the society's members might call for an upwards revaluation of the £1.8 billion Lloyds bid."



Changing Spillers' shape: Richard Clothier says the merger will give scope for cost cuts

## Dalgety in \$700m pet food deal

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

DALGETY is set to become Europe's second largest pet food manufacturer after its \$700 million takeover of Quaker's European pet food business.

The deal marks a change in direction for Dalgety, which has decided to pull out of consumer foods to concentrate on pet foods, food ingredients and its agribusiness. The company has put its Golden Wonder and Homepride food operations up for sale and hopes to raise at least £300 million from their disposal.

The Quaker deal, which has yet to be cleared by the European Commission, will be partly funded by a one-for-four rights issue at 335p a share, raising £186 million.

The balance will be funded by debt, lifting Dalgety's gearing to 200 per cent from 49 per cent. Richard Clothier, chief executive, said debts would be reduced by disposals.

Quaker, best known for its Felix cat food and Fido dog food brands, has 13 per cent of the European pet food market. With Spillers, Dalgety's existing pet food business, the enlarged operation will have a 21 per cent share. Mars, the market leader, has 46 per cent.

Mr Clothier said there was considerable scope to cut costs by merging the two businesses and he forecasts annual savings of £40 million after three years. He expects job losses will run into the hundreds, although most of the cuts will be on the Continent.

Analysts broadly welcomed the move, although some said Dalgety had paid a full price for a business that last year made operating profits of just £20 million.

The group also reported a rise in pre-tax profits to £60.9 million from £56.4 million in the six months to June 30. The interim dividend is 8.5p (8.0p).

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## BUSINESS TODAY

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## Pound hurt by political uncertainty

STERLING weakened yesterday to a five-month low against the mark, under pressure after showing no positive reaction to Thursday's base rate rise and on continuing uncertainties surrounding the British Government (Janet Bush writes).

The pound's trade weighted index, based on the new calculation in force this week, closed at \$7.9 compared with 88.6 on Thursday. Sterling hit a low of 2.3840 against the mark before closing at DM2.3862, down from DM2.4038 on Thursday.

Political worries, stirred up by the renewed debate over Northern Ireland, were exacerbated by an article in *The Economist* saying that the Government could fall "sooner than anyone yet believes" over European policy.

The dollar was strong in its own right after US factory goods jumped by 1.7 per cent in December against expectations of a 0.9 per cent rise.

## Consumer credit soars by £865m

By PATRICIA TEHAN

DEMAND for private credit soared in December as consumers flocked to the shops to buy household goods and "big ticket" items such as cars, vindicating Thursday's base rate increase.

Adam Cole, economist with James Capel, said: "Consumer borrowing is surging at rates above those seen at the time of the late 1980s boom and the breakdown of the data suggests that much of this is financing discretionary spending on durable goods."

He added that the figures confirmed that recent consumer spending gloom had been "grossly overdone" and that base rates have much further to rise this year.

Official statistics published yesterday showed a net £865 million increase in demand for credit, against expectations of a £550 million rise. November's credit data was revised to show an increase of £707

million, from £677 million. Andrew Milligan, economist at New Japan Securities, said the higher-than-expected December figure was likely to be associated with the 0.5 per cent rise in retail sales at Christmas, and the increase in net borrowing on credit cards.

Net credit card borrowing rose to £333 million, and compares with £100 million to £200 million a month in the previous three months. Borrowing from banks rose to £402 million, just below November's exceptionally strong £483 million.

Figures from the British Bankers' Association showed a dip in loan growth by the major British banking groups in the fourth quarter against the third quarter of 1994. In the final quarter, the net rise in bank lending was £3.265 billion, against £3.34 billion in the third quarter. The December increase was £1.46 billion.

## AAH shares hit by trading statement

By GEORGE SIVELL, ASSISTANT BUSINESS EDITOR



Padovan: pegging the final

SHARES in AAH, the wholesale pharmaceutical group, dropped 41p to 280p yesterday after a grim trading statement that included revelation of a £3 million theft of cheques from customers, discovered as the rest of the statement was being prepared for the Stock Exchange on Thursday.

The theft was spotted by a diligent bank teller who noticed that the name on a series of cheques, AAH Pharmaceuticals, did not tally with the name of the account into which they were being paid. The banks are co-operating fully with AAH and have now discovered a number of re-

cently opened accounts. Merseyside police are understood to be investigating and examining security camera film from bank branches. The cheques were originally written out by retail chemists settling monthly accounts with AAH.

John Padovan, the AAH chairman, also revealed yesterday that its environmental services division, which empties the dustbins in Wandsworth and cuts the grass in London's Regent's Park among other contracts, will suffer a £3 million loss in the year to the end of March. The loss covers the cost of provi-

sions for contracts which appear to have been taken on at a loss. AAH also revealed that profits from distribution services will fall substantially below last time's £2.3 million. The division is trying to get out of low-margin contract work and build up the more profitable shared-user service with retail pharmacists.

AAH, however, said its core wholesale and retail health-care businesses continue to perform soundly, with sales growing exceeding the British market average. A maintained final dividend of 11.9p a share is expected to be recommended.

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## Countdown for Maxwell's pensioners

The ghost of Robert Maxwell lingers on: dragging behind it a £440 million ball and chain. This, it may be recalled, was the sum which Maxwell purloined from almost any pension fund that tickled his fancy. The coffers of Mirror Group Newspapers and Maxwell Communication Corporation, his two publicly quoted enterprises, proved irresistible; as did others within Maxwell's private empire. All in all, Maxwell's quaint little ways affected some 30,000 pensioners.

A ray of light, in the shape of the Maxwell Pensioners' Trust's attempt to secure a "global" settlement on the part of certain financial institutions, recently passed behind a cloud. Last month saw the deadline for the global deal finally run out and Sir John Cuckney, the government-appointed arbiter between the pension funds and City institutions, stepped down as head of the Maxwell Pensioners' Trust. Sir John emerged as formal adviser to Peter Lilley, Social Security Secretary, and let it be known that he would attempt to broker a final round of talks, swiftly dubbed "son of global settlement".

Almost everything associated with the global settlement, and its successor, has been cloaked in a degree of anonymity: a scenario in which Sir John, a one-time denizen of M15, is admirably cast. Sir Peter Webster, who formerly chaired the

Maxwell Pensioners' Trust, spent the best part of two years attempting to clinch a settlement. When the Law Debenture Trust, trustee of the Maxwell Communication Staff Plan, pulled out of talks, albeit temporarily, Sir Peter bowed out. Critics perceived Sir Peter, a former High Court judge, as a little too fair to certain parties closely identified with the Maxwell fiasco. Enter Sir John, with his own particular brand of fairness. His subsequent decision to pass over the Maxwell Pensioners' Trust's reins to Jane Newell, a founder trustee, distanced himself from the pension funds. It also served to flag his role as a government emissary.

Anonymous as the global deal may have been, various details have emerged. It is eminently clear that, although Global Settlement Mk 1 broke down, agreement was almost within reach. In broad brush terms, the original deficit, courtesy of the "Bouncing Czech," was some £440 million. Although difficult to ascertain, recoveries would appear to top up to something approaching £100 million. This figure is often put at £180 million, confusion arising from the fact that some £80 million was in the kitty to start with. Genuine recoveries include some £25 million worth of Teva shares returned by the NatWest, approximately £27 million worth of investments handed over by Lehman Brothers and proceeds from the



MELVYN MARCKUS

Invesco-MIM settlement. But, bearing in mind that Maxwell parted company with the *Lady Chislaire* in November 1991, liabilities have inevitably risen. Put another way, the recoveries of £100 million do little more than make good the lost investment returns on the lost assets: so much so that the black hole is still perceived to be in the region of £400 million.

It was in the autumn of 1992 that Lilley agreed to offer the Maxwell pension funds an effective interest-free loan by permitting the funds to defer payments of the State Scheme Premiums, due to cover a major "contracting in" exercise which served to guarantee a minimum pension. The Government, by all accounts, may be willing to continue this deferral for some pos-

sibly all of the blighted funds. That said, continuance is not forgiveness. Should Sir John's velvet glove achieve a settlement, litigation against those outside the agreement will start immediately. Funds recouped will metamorphose into premium repayments. Should the settlement talks founder, litigation will commence against all parties — lengthy and costly.

Let us return to the deficit of £400 million. The Government's deferral policy is effectively worth around £100 million, cutting the gap to some £300 million. Word has it that a figure of around £250 million was on the table from institutions keen to deal out. So, with a mid-February deadline in the air, the debate centres on some £50 million.

Which institutions, you may ask, are involved in this £50 million debate? Information on this count is exceedingly hard to come by but MCC, under the administration of Price Waterhouse, is clearly in the frame, as are Maxwell's private companies, under the administration of Arthur Andersen. Goldman Sachs and Lehman Bros are unlikely to have escaped Sir Peter's attention, while Coopers & Lybrand, auditors to so much of Maxwell's empire, presumably comes relatively high on the list. One way or another, Sir John is rumoured to be negotiating with half a dozen or so parties: some of which are rumoured to have proved significantly more

co-operative than others. Creditors of MCC are understood to be particularly keen to see a settlement achieved, not least because Law Debenture, trustee to the Maxwell Communication Pension Plan, is making claims against a host of subsidiaries, a factor which makes it difficult for Price Waterhouse to pay dividends up to the MCC parent. Not a few US "vulture funds" now number among the creditors.

MCC, courtesy of administrators Price Waterhouse, has, for its part, taken legal action against Coopers. While defending this, Coopers also has to contend with an inquiry into its pension scheme audits by the Joint Disciplinary Scheme, spearheaded by the Institute of Chartered Accountants. In the event, the Government comes out of the Maxwell saga relatively well. Positive action heralded the appointment of Sir John in an advisory capacity, along with the creation of the Maxwell Pensioners Trust, the Maxwell Pensioners Charitable Trust and the Maxwell Pensions Unit within the Department of Social Security. Also doing immense good by stealth is Law Debenture which has prepared, along with solicitors Nabarro Nathanson, many of the cases which Sir John is holding in that velvet glove.

Should the talks fail, memories will prove long.

## Bank chief warns staff of tough year

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL Westminster Bank has written to its 55,700 branch staff warning that 1994 was a "difficult year" and that parts of its business have failed to reach targets. The letter has prompted concern that up to half the staff will get no pay rise this year.

Union representatives claim the bank is likely to have made profits of more than £1.5 billion in 1994 and say the pay offer is "derisory" and the workforce "demoralised".

In his letter to staff, Martin Gray, chief executive of NatWest UK, said 1994 had been "difficult". He said the first-half improvement in profits was largely due to lower bad-debt provisions, costs were rising, income had fallen and he expected 1995 to be a "tough year".

Mike Trippitt, banking analyst with Warburg Securities, said the message from Mr Gray was "pretty pessimistic", but that NatWest seemed to be prepared to compete for business at the expense of revenues.

The row between NatWest and its staff comes at the start of the financial reporting season for the banking sector, which will be kicked off next Friday by Lloyds. The banks are thought likely to report profits totalling £10 billion for 1994, up from £7 billion in 1993.

Dai Davies, assistant general secretary of the NatWest Staff Association, said the bank's performance-related

pay offer meant that 65 per cent of staff would get an increase in basic pay of less than 1 per cent, and a "significant" number would not receive a pay rise.

A NatWest spokesman said the offer, effective from April, would give rises of between 0 and 9 per cent, depending on a worker's performance. She said at least half the staff would receive a pay rise exceeding the current rate of inflation and "a small minority" would not receive a rise in basic pay.

However, she added, most staff would benefit from a profit-sharing scheme and the bank felt that "pay should not be reviewed in isolation but as part of a total reward package which includes basic pay, performance bonus, profit sharing and other non-cash benefits".

Rory Murphy, general secretary of the staff association, said: "To offer staff, who have contributed to the vast profit expected, a cost-of-living and performance increase of nothing defies belief." The association represents 60 per cent of NatWest workers.

Bifu, the banking and finance union, said the offer would hit experienced and long-serving staff the hardest. The staff association had claimed a 7 per cent rise, Bifu had claimed 5 per cent or £500, whichever was greater. Both plan to go back to the negotiating table with NatWest this month.



Gordon Thomas, of Lydney, left, and John Robertshaw

## Shorco buys Lydney

SHORCO Group Holdings, the plant hire specialist, announced the acquisition of Lydney Containers Holdings, a maker of high security on-site accommodation and storage units, for a profit-related consideration of up to £1.7 million. Shorco is raising £1.4

million through a rights issue. Existing shares fell 2p to 10p. The company, whose chairman is John Robertshaw, forecast a rise in profits to £560,000 before tax for 1994 from £284,000 in the previous year, with earnings of not less than 8p a share (4.3p).

## Etam shares fall on profit warning

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

SHARES in Etam, the women's fashion retailer, dropped 18p to 183p yesterday as the company gave warning that operating profits for 1994 would be below the previous year's level.

The group said the bottom line had been hit by weak demand in the crucial winter months as a result of unseasonably warm weather, and poorly-targeted merchandise.

Profits were also affected by more than 60 of the group's 224 stores closing temporarily for refits.

Etam now expects operating profits for the year to January 28 to be between £11 million and £12 million, well down on the £14.5 million achieved in

the previous 12 months. It intends to recommend a maintained final dividend of 5.75p, making a total payout of 7.7p, a small increase on the 7.5p paid in 1993, but below City expectations of about 8.5p.

Analysts promptly downgraded their pre-tax profit forecasts to about £12 million from about £18 million.

John Richards, retail analyst at NatWest Securities, believes the group's problems go beyond store disruption and the warm autumn weather which has hurt slow clothing retailers. He believes Etam has become uncompetitive on price, and has suffered from the revival at Dorothy Perkins, its main rival.

## Managers and staff win CPL

A BUYOUT team of management and employees has succeeded with a £72 million bid for Coal Products (CPL), the solid fuels manufacturing business of British Coal (Martin Barrow writes).

The team, headed by David Foster, operations director, was chosen ahead of three other shortlisted bids and was backed by Legal & General Ventures.

CPL estimates that it has about 30 per cent of the UK solid smokeless fuel market and some 60 per cent of the UK foundry coke market. Operating profit was about £16 million on turnover of £131 million in the last financial year — its best performance since the mid-1970s. The company employs 500 people.

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### THE SUNDAY TIMES

We have not given up on the long-term goal to make Frankfurt a major investment banking centre, but perhaps it is a struggle we can comfortably leave to the next generation...

Ronald Schirmer, chairman of the board created by the move to London of Deutsche Bank's investment banking base. Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow



KPMG: Colin Sharman and Gerry Acher

# Slugging it out for the title of top accountants

partners in power

Jon Ashworth talks to the men who run a giant money-making machine thriving on attention to detail

If one has to be cornered by two accountants at a drinks party, they might as well be Colin Sharman and Gerry Acher. One is built like a boxer and looks as though he might rear your head off at the slightest provocation. The other is reminiscent of the aspirant Lion Tamer of Monty Python fame. Mild-mannered and bespectacled, he dreams of a life in the Big Top, cracking his whip to keep the snarling beasts at bay.

Those who know Acher, 49, will chuckle at the thought. As head of audit and accounting at KPMG, he oversees a giant money-making machine which thrives on plain, boring, attention to detail. Auditing is dull. But wait. This is also the man who nearly fell 800 feet to his death scaling a mountain peak, and who races vintage cars to relax. Could there be something behind the unassuming facade?

Sharman, for his part, is about as far from the traditional caricature of an accountant as it is possible to be. One can more easily picture him lugging huge sides of beef through Smithfield meat market, or slugging it out in the boxing ring, downing his opponent in a hail of well-aimed blows.

Just over a year since he became senior partner of KPMG, inheriting an 8,800-employee firm with a fee income of more than £500 million a year, Sharman, 51, has decided to take on the rest of the UK accounting profession. Fists flying, he is going for the knockout. He

wants to make KPMG the "Cazenove" of the accountancy world. Acher, if you like, is his manager. While Sharman throws the punches, Acher is there in the background, making sure that the bills are paid on time.

These are difficult times for accountancy firms. Most of the big players have been caught up in one or another high-profile City scandal. Price Waterhouse and Ernst & Young are on the receiving end of an \$8 billion lawsuit over their role as auditors to the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. Auditors have been branded as not only boring, but dangerous, too.

Acher, at the top of a pyramid that embraces 350 partners and 4,500 staff, and generates fees of about £210 million, is refreshingly candid on this point.

"My challenge is to raise the standards of auditing," he says. "I don't mind admitting that probably in the rush of the late eighties our standards may not have been as high as we would like them to have been. It was the dash for growth, the 'easy money' attitude."

Firms, he says, were sharply brought to heel by the massive swell of litigation surrounding the big company frauds. The damage, he concedes, will take years to repair. "Gradually, the stigma of the late eighties will be removed, but it is a long, slow process. Some might say we may not even succeed."

Acher rightly points out that



Colin Sharman, left, is battling to make KPMG the 'Cazenove' of accountancy; Gerry Acher makes sure the bills are paid on time

KPMG has escaped the worst of the big scandals — although one feels he may be tempting fate there. Who can forget the Ferranti debacle? In 1991, the firm agreed to pay £40 million to settle a lawsuit arising from the discovery of a massive fraud at International Signals. As recently as January 1994, KPMG paid out nearly £64 million in settlement over its auditing of Tricontinental, an Australian merchant bank that collapsed with debts of Aus\$2.6 billion.

What of Acher's family man? Married and with two sons, he has lived in the same house in Cobham, Surrey, for the past 23 years. He is at his desk by just after 8am and

spends "three or four" evenings a week at dinners or meetings. Weekends are for the family.

Acher nearly came to a sticky end as a 21-year-old student when a climbing trip to the Lake District went wrong. "I had just done a glorious climb up Pillar Rock," he recalls. "I was preparing to abseil down the first 70 feet when I tripped and went head over heels over the edge. It should have been 800 feet to my death." Miraculously, his foot jammed in a crack just six feet below the summit.

These days, he and his wife, Joyce, are more likely to be found hill-walking, or tackling vintage car rallies. He is also a good

community man (the auditor again), doing much for the charity Motability, which helps to get disabled people on to the road.

Sharman spent his early childhood in Eritrea and Egypt before settling at school in Salisbury. He joined Peat Marwick Mitchell in 1966 and held various posts in the UK and mainland Europe before becoming senior regional partner for the South East in 1990. Three years in the job left him branded as a hatchet man — nearly 1,000 staff axed in two waves of blood-letting — but Sharman made no apologies for his actions. "I can detach myself when a business decision is involved," he said at the time.

There are those who talk of the KPMG mafia — Sharman and his inner ring versus the rest. Certainly, an element of this persists. Sharman and Acher leave regional communities to run the show, but reserve the right to step in and veto decisions at any time.

"My job is, as a chairman, not to get involved in the day to day running," he says. "I only intervene when there's something manifestly going wrong."

Sharman spends very little time in his office these days, which is just as well, since it looks like a storeroom. His desk is almost buried behind photographic paraphernalia. A photo of Sharman sailing

with Prince Edward hangs on the wall, a legacy of their mutual support for the Ocean Youth Club, a sailing charity. Sharman's son has been studying boat-building in Southampton, and flies to New Zealand on Monday to test his mettle in southern waters. His daughter is about to start at the Royal Berkshire Hospital as an ENT specialist.

His wife, Angie, has her hands full running the family farm in Tytherton Lucas, Wiltshire, source of Sharman's own-label Bosmere wine. The Roux brothers, Albert and Michel, are close family friends, although their opinion of the wine is not known.

He talks zealously of his ambitions for the firm: how he wants to make auditors respected once more, and repackaging services for clients.

He echoes Acher's views on City scandals. "We have a relatively clean sheet. By comparison, touch wood, we don't have a Maxwell, a BCCI, a Polly Peck. We have been able to take the high ground."

Sharman hopes to build on the idea of an all-in-one package, in which a lead partner will act as the point of contact for all the firm's services. I venture the word "salesman". This irritates Sharman. He prefers the concept of a specialist adviser.

It all comes down to rebranding: dropping Peat Marwick from the name, asking clients how the firm can do better. "So what's new? Not a helluva lot, but we're going to do it quicker and better." Has he any regrets over the name change? "It's a bloody hard business world out there. You've got to focus on the next century. I want KPMG to be synonymous with the best."

So what does Acher think of Sharman and his mission? "We both share the same view of where the accountancy professions should be going and how one should be getting there. His job is the bigger scene, the firm as a whole. My job is quite simply to make our audit practice the best."

Sharman concurs. "He was my choice for that job and he's done exactly what I wanted him to do: put auditing back into the spotlight."

## Speculation that could lift the Hong Kong dollar off its peg

The colony ties its currency to the US, but for how long? asks Michael Steinberger

Hong Kong's property market is collapsing and its stock market is reeling, but an even worse problem could be on the way: the Hong Kong dollar may fall victim to a speculative assault similar to the one that dislodged sterling from Europe's exchange-rate mechanism (ERM) in 1992.

Like sterling before its devaluation, the Hong Kong dollar is bound to an exchange-rate mechanism: it is pegged to the US dollar at a fixed rate of 7.80. The currency link was established amid a political crisis in 1983 and has since become the linchpin of Hong Kong's financial system. London and Peking consider the peg inviolable in the run-up to 1997, when Britain cedes the territory to China.

But David Roche, president of the London research firm Independent Strategy, believes the peg is doomed. He predicts that currency traders will soon target the Hong Kong dollar and sever its link to the greenback.

Peter Churchhouse, managing director of equity research at Morgan Stanley Asia, says: "If there was a concerted run at any currency, it would be quite difficult for any government to defend it. And Hong Kong is no exception."

The peg is considered vulnerable because it has become an economic liability. To keep the value of the Hong Kong dollar steady, interest rates in the territory must track US rates; but the two economies now move in opposite directions.

In the early 1990s, the US recession forced the Federal Reserve to slash interest rates. Hong Kong's Monetary Authority, its quasi-central bank, was obliged to follow suit, despite the territory's robust economic growth. Low interest rates further stimulated the buoyant economy and sparked a speculative binge in Hong Kong stocks and properties.

The twin asset bubbles are now deflating but, with the Federal Reserve raising in-



The Hong Kong and American economies are headed in opposite directions

terest rates to check the booming American economy, the Monetary Authority is also hiking rates. This is expected to prolong or even accelerate a bear market that has already caused the Hang Seng index to fall 35 per cent and trimmed property values by 20 per cent.

Peter Everington, managing director of Hong Kong's Regent Fund Management, said recently: "Few have realised that Hong Kong's bubble was every bit as excessive as that of Tokyo by the end of the 1980s. The coming pain will doubtless be comparably severe."

Mr Everington believes that breaking the peg would ease the economy's downturn. However, other Hong Kong investors support the fixed exchange rate. Patrick Thomas, managing director of Oakreed Financial Services, says: "When you have the uncertainty of political changeover, the area in which you need absolute certainty is the currency."

And as Mr Everington concedes: "Any fixed rate can be maintained if you are willing to face the pain." So far, Hong Kong's Government has shown that it is.

Last month, the Monetary Authority struck a pre-emptive blow against speculators when it more than doubled

short-term interest rates in two days. Rates are now back to their original levels.

The warning shot is not likely to deter hedge fund managers like George Soros; but Ian Perkin, chief economist for the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, thinks speculators may not realise that the Hong Kong dollar peg is fundamentally different — and stronger — than the "crawling peg" that tied sterling to the ERM. The ERM allowed sterling to float within wide bands around its fixed parity against the mark. This latitude enabled currency traders to repeatedly challenge the Major Government's commitment to the peg.

Hong Kong, however, operates a currency-board system which requires that for every 7.80 Hong Kong dollars issued into the domestic market, one US dollar must be deposited with the Monetary Authority's exchange fund. This mechanism makes it very costly to speculate against the currency. Mr Perkin explains: "The Hong Kong dollar can float as much it likes, but the exchange fund will only accept dollars at 7.80, so it will always come back there.

Otherwise, someone is going to get badly burnt."

If speculators risk an assault regardless, and interest rate hikes fail to curb selling, the currency-board system provides the Monetary Authority with ample foreign exchange reserves — US\$43 billion at the last count — to defend the currency.

But James Lister-Cheese, of Investment Strategy, doubts that the Hong Kong Government would be allowed to deploy this weapon. "China would prefer to have the foreign exchange reserves," he reckons.

With fewer than 900 days until Hong Kong is repatriated, currency speculators may force some unpleasant decisions on London and Peking. If China will not permit Hong Kong to protect the currency peg with its foreign exchange holdings, and higher interest rates send its economy into a tailspin, the Government will have little choice but to let the dollar float.



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## TAX ADVICE 27

How the taxman helps with the problem

## WEEKEND MONEY

## WIDOW'S WAIT 29

Delays put a policy claim on hold



As base rates head up again, Liz Dolan and Sara McConnell find the experts divided on what the best deals might be

# Getting a fix on the right home loan

**H**ard-pressed home-buyers, many already facing mortgage rate rises this week, were forced to get out their well-thumbed crystal balls again on Thursday as base rates increased yet again. Should they fix at current rates, or ride the roller coaster for the next year or two in the hope of better news in the run-up to the next election? If they do fix, for how long should they lock themselves in? If they do not, should they consider discounts instead?

Experts who earn their living by second-guessing the market cannot agree. So, for borrowers who are more at home fixing gall bladders or plumbing systems than mortgage rates, the answer is to consider all available evidence and then follow their instincts. Trevor Williams, a Lloyds Bank economist, suggests sticking with the variable rate until the dust clears. Simon Tyler, of Chase de Vere Home Loans, the mortgage broker, advises looking into the best fix available as soon as possible. "If you see a five-year fix below 9 per cent, take it."

Mr Williams says: "The prospect is of lower rates by the end of 1996. Given that, don't fix for the next year at least." Lloyds expects base rates, currently 6.75 per cent, to have peaked at 7.5 per cent by the end of this year. They are then likely to stabilise until the fourth quarter of 1996, and will start to fall some time before the November Budget, Mr Williams says.

On that advice, discounted variable rates are an attractive option for eligible borrowers. But, Mr Tyler says: "Discounts aren't much good if base rates go up as fast as people are saying. One lot of economists expects them to peak at 9 per cent early next year."

Lenders, including the market leaders, Abbey National and the Halifax, have moved quickly to counter fears of further mortgage pain. Abbey said yesterday: "We see little case for changing mortgage rates in response to the latest increase in bank base rates and would be surprised if any of the major lenders drew a different conclusion." The Halifax made similar noises. But they could be forced to eat their words almost immediately.

ly, Mr Tyler says. "It's definitely a case of waiting to see who jumps first. I wouldn't be at all surprised if it happens within the next ten days."

Mr Tyler expects rates to rise to 8.99 per cent, within a whisker of the psychological 9 per cent barrier. The latest mortgage rate rise did not fully reflect the previous 0.5 per cent base rate rise, and savers will start to get restless if their rates continue to lag behind.

Most people with standard variable rate mortgages will now be paying about 8.35 per cent for their loan, up from 8.1 per cent before Christmas. This has added £7 a month to the cost of a standard £50,000 repayment loan and £9 a month to an endowment, according to the Halifax. This time last year, the standard rate was 7.64 per cent.

**T**he Cheltenham & Gloucester, which promised borrowers this week that it would undercut its competitors' variable rate by at least 0.25 per cent this year, does not have to attract new savers as most of its accounts are closed to new business, pending its takeover by Lloyds Bank. It should also have no problem keeping savers' money because anyone who withdraws too much will no longer qualify for a payout.

Lenders have already been getting more business from people interested in remortgaging with a fixed rate, than new borrowers, according to Ian Darby, of John Charcol, the mortgage broker. He says: "The maths comes down in favour of refinancing." Some one remortgaging with a two-year fixed-rate will save, on average, about 2 per cent on the current variable rate, Mr Darby says.

Top fixed-rate offers currently available include the Greenwich Building Society's 7.99 per cent for four years, National Counties' one-year fix at 2.99 per cent, and Northern Rock's 8.74 per cent to April, 2000 (8.99 per cent without the society's own buildings and contents insurance).

Yorkshire Building Society offers first-time buyers a 7 per cent discount on its 8.44 per cent variable rate for six months,

and a 3 per cent discount for the rest of the year. Existing borrowers moving home or remortgaging get a 1.9 per cent discount for three years, or 2 per cent if the deposit is more than 25 per cent.

■ Fixing rates can be risky. For example, borrowers with a £50,000 interest-only loan from the Halifax could have fixed their rate at 10.5 per cent for six years in January 1991, when the variable rate was 11.95 per cent. But their timing would have been bad, as variable rates were set to fall well into single figures over the next two years.

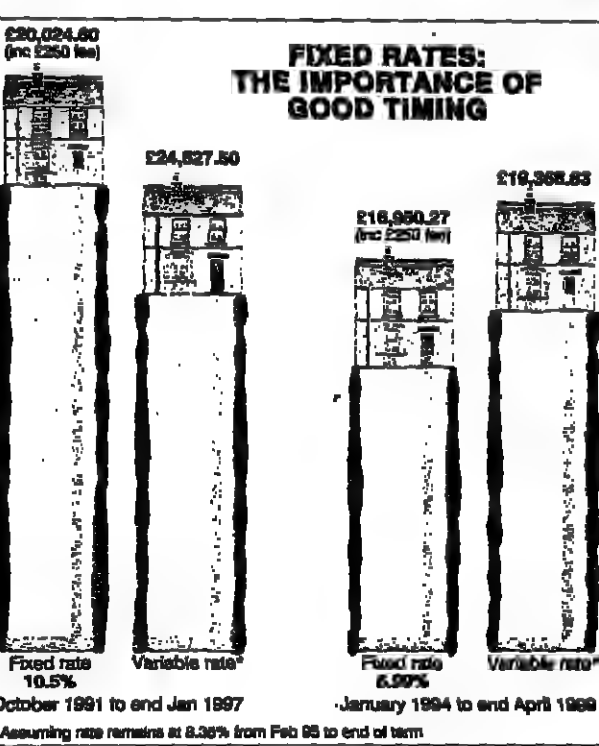
Over the term of the loan, they will have spent £24,628, including an initial arrangement fee of £250. Borrowers who stuck with the variable rate, by contrast, will have paid only £20,024.60. (This assumes the variable rate stays constant from now on). But borrowers who took up a five-year, fixed-rate deal of 6.99 per cent in January 1994 will have paid only £16,951 including fees, after five years. Those on the variable rate will have paid £19,369.

If interest rates move against you, or you want to get shot of your fixed rate for other reasons, the penalties for getting out of it are severe, ranging from three months to 12 months' gross interest.

Comment, page 27  
Buyers' market, page 32



Shopping around: there is no shortage of fixed-rate and discounted deals among lenders desperately trying to prevent their mortgage business drying up



Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

## Cut rates to be truly credible

**R**ises in short-term interest rates are depressing for investors in financial assets, whether shares or bonds, since these lose value relative to money. Higher base rates undermine confidence in the housing market. More fundamentally, they make businesses more cautious, less likely to invest in expansion. That, at least, is the traditional reaction in Britain. The long history of stop-go monetary cycles makes people think that rises in interest rates presage a stop. Three rises in five months will fix the financial barometer at "storms ahead" and persuade the prudent to batten the hatches.

The Government's latest monetary policy is, however, meant to change all that. In 12 months' time, investors should have some idea whether it will. To that end, the Bank of England argues, two elements of policy are crucial. First, it must gain credibility in fighting inflation. Second, it must anticipate, responding to forecasts of what will happen to inflation in two years' time, rather than now.

To gain credibility, the Bank is anxious to satisfy the demands of the bond and currency markets. If investors and traders think there ought to be a rate rise, they should have one. Not that the Bank would say that. But a falling pound or gilt-edged prices are deemed signals of "inflationary expectations", which amounts to the same thing.

To preempt any acceleration in inflation, the Bank has pushed most of the traditional indicators into the background. Instead, it highlights the rate of growth. If the economy is expanding



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

faster than the Bank reckons it can sustain, then inflation must rise. So it is time for a touch on the brake. This makes judgments hard in what most still reckon to be a recovery phase, when growth is normally faster than average.

How well is the policy working? If tested by credibility on inflation, there is, so far, modest cause for satisfaction. Short-term interest rates are usually reckoned the biggest influence on long-term rates. Yet yields on long-term government bonds have generally fallen since mid-September, from more than 9 per cent to 8.7 per cent. This gentle fall is nothing compared with the rise from 6.7 per cent in the preceding months, when the worldwide bubble in bond prices burst. But it is a start. On the foreign exchanges, sterling has risen 1.8 per cent on the Bank's index since the first rate rise. The big rebound came in September and October and the exchange rate has been sagging a bit since, but so far, so good. For the policy to succeed, how-

ever, it needs to gain another kind of credibility. The Bank and the Chancellor need to show share investors, housebuyers and business that they can control inflation without stopping growth; that the Bank, guided by the currency and bond markets, will not just keep demanding higher rates until it induces another, if milder, recession.

At this point in the trial, the jury is suspicious. The FT-SE 100 share index has bounced around in a narrow range of 2,950 to 3,150, falling a net 3.5 per cent. House prices have sagged, business investment is disappointing. No wonder. The Bank fears that the sustainable growth rate is low. Unless investors and business folk gain confidence, this pessimism will be self-fulfilling.

**T**here is only one way to convince investors — to show that base rates can go down as well as up, while the economy is still growing healthily. The Bundesbank has managed it in the past. The Bank has something to prove. Many City economists see rates above 8 per cent this year and still rising. Just before pushing the latest rise, however, the Governor did opine that growth is slowing to a more sustainable pace. Ministers would love a rate cut at Budget time. David Kern, Nat-West bank economist, argues that base rates might peak at 7.25 per cent and fall near the end of the year. The exact peak matters less than the symbolic turn. If — but only if — investors and business start believing that monetary policy can sustain growth as well as dishing inflation, share prices could boom.

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In the wake of the American-led rescue of Mexico, Robert Miller examines investment approaches to the region



Until the crisis, Mexico was a popular first stop for investors

## Down Latin America way

The \$50 billion Mexican rescue package brokered by President Clinton and backed by the International Monetary Fund this week brought relief to thousands of investors who have their money in Latin American funds.

Although the Mexican stock market staged a tentative rally immediately after the announcement, it is still down by about 22 per cent in dollar terms since the start of the year.

But, as Emily McLaughlin, a director of Foreign & Colonial Emerging Market's Latin

American desk, explains, investors in the region should be prepared to take a sanguine, and possibly even a bullish, investment approach to Latin America. If you are already invested there, stick with it.

For new investors, she says: "You don't want to be too clever over the precise timing of your investment. For example, if you missed the best three weeks between 1989 and 1994, your return would now be 8 per cent instead of 12 per cent. That is a fall of 37 per cent."

"I suggest that you start to invest in Latin America through a diversified fund by means of a regular low-cost monthly savings scheme or a one-off lump sum either in a UK or Luxembourg-registered fund or company."

Until the economic crisis and the devaluation of the peso, Mexico was a popular first port of call for American fund managers and investors who only began to invest outside the United States in the past couple of years. This has helped to drive the market to new heights.

Ms McLaughlin adds: "Mexico was the first stop for many US investors who felt they knew it better because of

its proximity. Only afterwards, did they start to venture further south. We still believe that the Peruvian and Brazilian markets represent exceedingly good value. Our view is that Peru's border dispute with Ecuador is not going to escalate into full-blown hostilities for any length of time."

She adds: "Chile and Colombia are also outstanding value. We are negative about Venezuela and Mexico and although Argentina is very, very cheap, the market is not likely to rally in the near term because of May's presidential elections."

The Latin American economies of today are very different from those as recently as the late 1980s.

Trade has been liberalised, former dictatorships have moved along the road to democratic reforms and inflation, once measured in thousands of per cent in many countries, is now in the low, single figures.

Stock exchanges have been opened up to foreign investors and the market capitalisation of the major markets has grown from US\$60 billion to more than \$500 billion in the

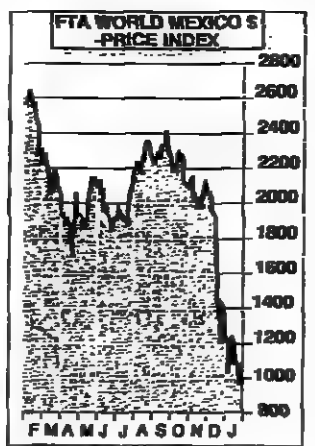
past six years. In overall portfolio-weighting terms, Ms McLaughlin suggests that up to 40 per cent of your money should be invested in global emerging markets.

Within that figure, between 40 and 45 per cent should be earmarked for Latin American markets.

At these levels she says: "You are going for reduced risk and increased returns. If you go over the upper limit, you may be increasing the chances of a higher return but the risks will also rise accordingly."

Ms McLaughlin's point that putting at least some of your money into Latin America is a wise investment decision was underlined at a conference on the region held in London this week.

Carolyn Dakers, senior Latin American fund manager at Thornton, the investment group, told delegates, who included representatives and advisers to the Mexican and Argentine finance ministries: "Many of the economies in the region continue to offer excellent longer-term investment prospects. We believe the real risk for investors is not having an exposure to Latin American stock markets."



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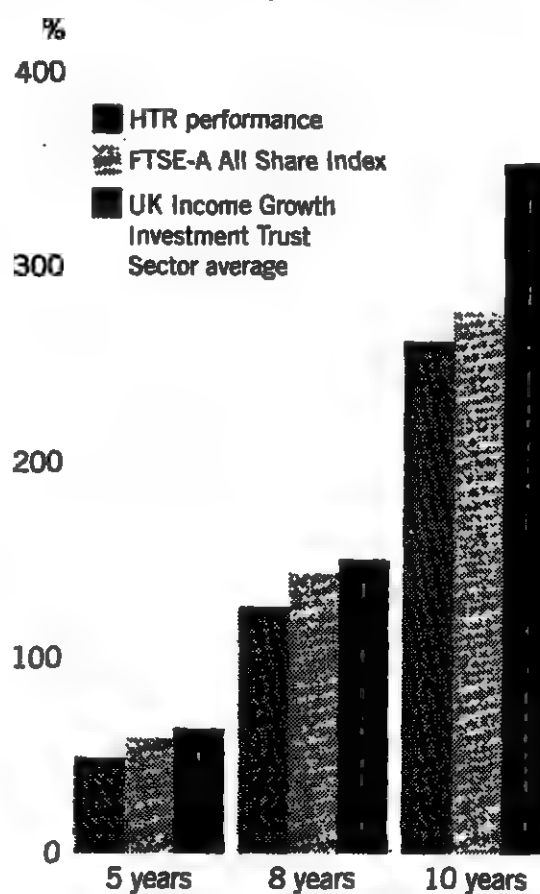
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### Henderson Touche Remnant's Outstanding Track Record



The chart shows the average performance of the two UK Income Growth Investment Trusts managed by Henderson Touche Remnant - TR City of London Trust PLC and Lowland Investment Company plc - compared with their investment trust sector average and with the FTSE-A All Share Index, over 5, 8 and 10 years.

Chart source: performance figures are compiled by AITC Services Ltd to 30.11.94 showing NAV total return with net income reinvested. Past performance is no guide to the future. The value of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount invested. Taxes related to PEPs may change if the law changes and the value of tax relief will depend upon the circumstances of the investor.

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HEADING the parade of this week's launches is Jupiter Tyndall's Investment Trust of Investment Trusts, which will close its offer on Valentine's Day. It is the first Jupiter Tyndall trust to be offered directly to private investors (Robert Miller writes).

The newcomer, which has already raised £25 million from the City, is a capital growth trust with an estimated starting yield of 2.25 per cent. The portfolio will be managed by Martin Hamilton-Sharp. His strategy will be to identify the countries in which he wants to invest and then select the individual trusts. The portfolio is expected to invest in up to 50 investment trusts. The minimum investment is £250 and dealings in the shares and warrants will start separately on February 22. Jupiter Tyndall is also offering free warrants in the ratio of one for

every five shares subscribed for. Unusually, each warrant will offer an income in the form of a 4.4p net dividend. Another launch is the Hambros Commodities Fund. This will be an open-ended investment company based in Dublin and listed on the Irish Stock Exchange. The fund will invest in listed companies that trade in commodities, or other real assets. The minimum investment is £1,000; or £1,500, and the charges are 5 per cent initially and 1.75 per cent annually, based on the value of the fund. The launch price of the shares will be \$1.

The commodities market is subject to violent fluctuations. And this is especially true of the futures market. The rewards can be handsome, but the losses can be very painful. Clerical Medical's new Extra Income unit trust, which is one of the first to take advantage of the new corporate bond PEP rules coming into force some time after the new tax year on April 6, has pulled in nearly £1 million so far. The estimated yield after April will be raised from its current 6 per cent to 8 per cent. The minimum investment is £1,000. Details: Jupiter Tyndall: 0800 430308; Hambros: 0171-480 5000; Clerical Medical: 0800 373369.

### Correction

Quoting performance figures from HSW on January 28, we gave £2,223 as the current value for a £1,000 lump sum invested in the FT-SE all-share index between December 31, 1989, and December 31, 1994. The figure should have been £1,502.06.



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## Messages that massage the image

Pony-tailed types from Soho advertising agencies work into the wee small hours finding ways to portray financial institutions as open, caring and committed to service.

The reality, however, is often at variance with the messages from poster sites and 20-second slots in the News at Ten break. Far too frequently, the public falls to receive the service it deserves, or to see fulfilled the promises implicit in the products the campaigns promote.

The result is a general disaffection with insurance companies, banks and building societies that these businesses seek to remedy, not by treating their customers better, but by stepping up the advertising spend.

This week, we report on Josephine Barrons, left a widow in January 1994, with



**COMMENT**  
**ANNE ASHWORTH**  
Personal Finance Editor

two young daughters. Fortunately, or so she thought, she had an endowment mortgage that guarantees to repay the loan on the death of one partner.

You and I would presume that, within two or three weeks, the insurance company would have arranged with the lender to pay off her loan. But between them, Abbey National and Friends Provident, the insurer, prevaricated for ten distressing months. In the meantime,

interest continued to be charged on the loan. The matter was not properly resolved until Weekend Money contacted the companies. The case exposes not only yet another flaw in the now much-devalued endowment mortgage, it might also make you think twice about acquiring the Abbey habit.

Another group of widows, the 5,000 holders of accounts with the Cheltenham & Gloucester, also felt rebuffed by the institution in which

they had placed their trust. Deprived (by a quirk of the Building Societies Act) of their bonus from the Lloyds takeover, they looked to the C&G for help. None was, at first, forthcoming. But after *The Times* followed by other papers called attention to this injustice done to a vulnerable group, the society stopped hiding behind the legislation.

This week, it made a £10 million offer to the widows, provided that a change could be hurried on to the statute books. Unfortunately, the Bill that sought to amend the offending clause was yesterday shouted down, proving that MPs can be as unthinking and intransigent as any financial institution.

The widows' last faint hope is the commitment of Treasury ministers and their Labour shadows to right this legal wrong. But the gesture may

mark the beginning of a less arrogant attitude at the C&G. I am now determined to believe that the C&G is keeping its variable mortgage rate a half a per cent below its rivals' average, out of concern for its borrowers, not solely to ensure their assent to the Lloyds deal.

The Halifax has also, at last, realised that the interests of investors may be more important than saving costs, especially when the economies produced can only be small scale. The society has abolished its mean-minded policy of making charges on accounts of less than £50, a subject that raised the ire of readers of *The Times*, some with thousands to invest.

The move is all the more remarkable because those with less than £100 in their accounts do not qualify to vote in the merger ballot.

## Number is up for the taxman

Liz Dolan on the implications of the Revenue's new leaner look

In a week when millions of tax code notices arrived on doormats across the nation, Civil Service unions predicted diminishing levels of service at local tax offices as 12,500 inland Revenue job cuts, planned over the next seven years, begin to take effect.

Bob Hawkes, assistant secretary, Inland Revenue Staff Federation (IRSF) says one in every six or seven local offices will close during the next three years. Some will be due to the integration of tax collection and assessment offices, but the effect will be the gradual

removal of accessibility for taxpayers, especially in remote areas. "There is not enough local access already, and the problem will escalate when self-assessment starts," Mr Hawkes says.

Over the next two or three years, up to nine million taxpayers will be required to start taking responsibility for the calculation of their tax bills. "The local office will be the first port of call for advice, especially for those who do not have a great deal of money," The Revenue says. "Obviously, people are worried about this. But, where offices close,

we will make sure there is somewhere else for them to go. We may visit the local library, or shopping centre, one day a week, for instance."

According to the Revenue, most people choose to do business over the telephone nowadays. But, says Mr Hawkes: "We say that many people still prefer face-to-face contact."



As Revenue job cuts start to bite, taxpayers may find inspectors a little thinner on the ground

MORAG PRESTON visited two very different London tax offices to discover what kind of service is currently available to taxpayers.

I am a research assistant, with no contract, nor any assurance that I will be needed tomorrow. Despite this, 25 per cent of my weekly pay is deducted for income tax. I wanted to find out whether I should continue to be taxed at source, or become a self-employed person.

**Aldgate:** This old-fashioned inner-city tax office deals with inquiries over a large counter, behind which stands a very defensive tax officer. Even with her undivided attention, my inquiry — whether my status was that of a freelance or a full-time employee — remained unanswered. I was told: "That is not our business. It is between you and your employer. All we want is to see that you are not paying too much tax." What I needed was a proper code number, she said, and "the sooner the better".

The sooner I started to pay tax at the correct rate, the sooner I will save at least £20 a week.

**Kensington:** The spacious office resembles a prosperous business. A vast selection of informative guides are free for the taking. There are seven computer terminals, each with a helpful tax officer. I talked to both a tax officer and a "status officer" and my questions were answered. Because I work at the same place every day for at least eight hours, the status officer advised me that my chances for being registered as self-employed were minimal. "But you're young, so why not give it a try?" She told me to write a simple letter to my district tax office, highlighting a few reasons why I did not consider myself to be an employee. But she also warned me that I would be asked more specific questions. Even if this is just good public relations, it worked, and although my financial situation remains the same, I left with a handful of leaflets and a sense of direction.

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## FINANCIAL TIMES

### PERSONAL PENSION PLANS

How pension plans work, and what to look for

## The five crucial questions

Personal pensions are designed for employees without access to a company scheme and for the self-employed. You can also use a plan to opt out of the state earnings-related pension scheme (Serps).

If you fall into one of these categories, you are part of the "target market" for life

offices and those who sell their products, and are likely to find yourself at the end of a very persuasive sales process.

Since their introduction in July 1988, personal pension plans have been sold to more than 5m people, many of whom would have been better off in

their company pension schemes.

With more than 100 providers in the market, clearly some will offer good value, while others will offer an unholy combination of high charges and abysmal performance. To help you through the selection process we set out five basic

issues to discuss with your adviser.

■ What are the charges, and are they competitive?

■ Is the contract flexible? Can you reduce and stop contributions, transfer the fund or take early retirement without penalty?

■ Is the performance consistently good over the long term?

■ Is the provider financially sound? Will it still be there when your investment matures?

■ How much does the advice cost? Should I pay this as commission or fees?

FINANCIAL TIMES WEEKEND DECEMBER 31/JANUARY 1 1995

## THE FIVE CRUCIAL ANSWERS

### ■ CHARGES

In a survey of regular contribution with-profits personal pension plans, the Society was shown to have the lowest charges of all the companies surveyed. The effect of some other companies' charges is more than half as much again.

Source: Money Marketing Survey 10 year with-profits personal pension plans, £100pwa contribution - 19 January 1995

### ■ PERFORMANCE

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\*single contribution

Source: Money Marketing FPR With-Profits Survey 1994

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The international rating agency, Standard and Poor, when confirming the Society's AA rating said:

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Naturally you want to leave all of your estate to your family or dependants or at least to someone of your choosing.

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Helen Pridham on what independent trustees do in an insolvency

## Who guards the pension guardians?



John Cunliffe says there is nothing to stop a couple of former car breakers setting up as independent trustees

There is growing criticism of the role of the independent trustees who normally have to be brought in to wind up pension funds when an employer becomes insolvent. At present, there are no checks on their competence, their charges or potential conflicts of interest, and the Government has not taken up the suggestion of the Pension Law Review Committee that it should be the job of the new pension regulator to appoint "suitable" trustees instead.

Independent trustees come in various shapes and sizes ranging from leading specialists such as the Law Debenture Corporation and Nabarro Nathanson, the firm of solicitors; offshoots of pension actuaries and consultants; and individuals who put themselves forward as independent trustees. Most, undoubtedly, do a good job for the members.

However, John Cunliffe, of McKenna & Co, the firm of solicitors, who acted for the Coleridge pension fund trustees when they tested out the Barber judgment in the European Court, believes that the present system is far from perfect. He says: "There is nothing to stop a couple of former car breakers setting themselves up as independent trustees, winding a scheme up as quickly as they possibly can and clobbering it for fees. There are a few independent trustees who I wouldn't lend a penny to."

The present system of dealing with pension schemes when companies go bust was put in place in November 1990. Since then it has been the legal duty of insolvency practitioners to appoint an independent trustee to wind up any pension scheme which is either a final salary scheme or a money purchase scheme with a guar-

anteed minimum pension, replacing state pension benefits. Once appointed, the independent trustee has "immense power", according to Roger Key, company pension scheme specialist at R Watson & Sons, the firm of actuaries. The independent trustee takes all decisions in connection with the scheme which had previously been taken by the employer and other trustees. He can, and often does, simply dismiss any existing trustees involved with the scheme. John Moloney, of the accountant Touche Ross, who is responsible for appointing in-

dependent trustees where his firm is acting as the insolvency practitioner, says: "I normally try to match the type of trustee to the type of company. With a large high profile insolvency, I will choose a larger firm as independent trustees. With the smaller company, mindful of the level of fees, I will probably choose an individual to act."

Although in law the first duty of the independent trustee is to get the best deal possible for pension scheme members, some commentators believe there is a danger of a conflict of interests because the trustees owe their jobs to

the insolvency practitioner. There may be a temptation not to pursue so vigorously any debts to the scheme, such as unpaid contributions, while the insolvency practitioner is also trying to meet the demands of other creditors.

In theory, the job of winding up a pension scheme is a simple matter of following the scheme rules, which set down the order of priorities for the payment of beneficiaries out of the scheme assets. However, as Mr Key points out: "Winding up a scheme where an employer has become

insolvent is rarely straightforward. If an employer is in difficulties, the pension scheme tends to get neglected, records may be missing and there is often a contribution shortfall. Putting the pieces of this jigsaw together can be time-consuming. Yet there is no requirement for an independent trustee to have any relevant pension scheme expertise."

The president of the Insolvency Practitioners' Association, Malcolm London, of Coopers & Lybrand, argues that: "Insolvency practitioners must satisfy themselves that an independent trustee has a

sufficient degree of competence to carry out the job of winding up a scheme." However, he agrees that "it would not be a bad idea to have some objective criteria laid down by a pensions authority".

Graham Withers, divisional director of Godwins, the firm of actuaries and consultants, who himself acts as an independent trustee, also concedes that "it is a valid criticism that there are no minimum qualifications laid down and no quality control over the actions of independent trustees. It is solely down to the insolvency practitioner to decide whether they are up to the job or not."

Another potential problem concerns the independent trustee's fees. They are negotiated with the insolvency practitioner but are paid out of the pension fund — indeed they have a first charge on the pension fund. So a fund that has a small surplus could end up in deficit, or a small deficit could become larger as a result.

Since the emphasis is on the trustee's independence — they must not have had any previous connection with the scheme — it means members have first to pay for the time it takes them to become acquainted with the scheme.

Mr Cunliffe believes costs could be reduced if the emphasis was on suitability rather than independence. He says that with a straightforward money purchase scheme or final salary scheme it may not be necessary to bring in an independent trustee if the existing trustees are competent and willing to do the job. To avoid potential conflicts of interest, Mr Cunliffe believes that the power of appointment should go to the new Pensions Regulator.

### REMEDY ROUTE

ONCE appointed, an independent trustee is answerable to the beneficiaries of the pension fund. However, he can be dismissed only by the courts. Members would need to have a strong case to get an independent trustee removed. Another course of action for an aggrieved beneficiary is to take the matter to the Pensions Ombudsman, who has the power to investigate and determine any complaint or dispute that arises between beneficiaries and a scheme's trustees.

THE case of one pension fund illustrates the difficulties facing an independent trustee. Pynford, an Essex construction company went into receivership in 1991. The scheme was worth £22 million. 97 per cent in Scottish Amicable's equities-based Scampi fund.

In May 1992, Pynford's receivers, Touche Ross, made John Norton independent trustee. Mr Norton is a retired solicitor and a former director of Hambros Bank, and, for five years, had chaired the pension fund of the Compressed Air Association.

Mr Norton dismissed the previous trustees, though one, Des Morgan, a former director of Pynford, said that he would have been happy

to stay on unpaid to help to acquaint Mr Norton with the scheme and locate former employees. However, Mr Norton, the independent trustee for six other pension funds says: "I usually... find it pays me to be free of other trustees. I also feel it is unfair to ask them to continue when it is I who must make the decisions."

Mr Norton appointed new investment managers, solicitors and actuaries to advise on winding up the scheme. He was advised to switch the fund into gilts to reduce its volatility, and match its liabilities; he switched it again, early in

### CASE STUDY

1991, into Kleinwort Benson's Pension Protector Portfolio Fund.

Mr Norton says: "When I took over Pynford's scheme, it was in deficit. I have now decided that rather than winding it up and giving beneficiaries less than they are entitled to, I will run it on a closed-fund basis. Using Kleinwort's fund, which is invested in a mixture of fixed-interest securities and derivatives, will enable the pension fund to gain from increases in the equity market but not the falls. I intend to continue in this way for five or ten years if necessary, until it is back in

balance." So far, all existing pensioners have been paid, he emphasises.

Nevertheless, by last September, fund assets had fallen in value to £1.7 million. However, the deficit also fell, from £1.5 million to £1.1 million, because liabilities had declined because of increased interest rates. On costs, Mr Norton says: "Expenses which cover my fees and those of other advisers have been running at around £65,000 pa for the past two years, but I hope they will go down to around £55,000."

Members complain that they have still had no benefits calculation. Mr Norton blamed poor record-keeping by past administrators.

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# Delays put widow's claim on hold

Liz Dolan looks into problems that arose over repaying a mortgage covered by an endowment policy

What happens to your mortgage if your partner dies before it is repaid? In common with millions of homebuyers, Josephine Barrons thought that this was one thing she did not have to worry about because the £17,500 mortgage taken out by herself and her husband, Roger, in 1988 was protected by an endowment policy.

But when Mr Barrons died in a car accident in January, 1994, Mrs Barrons, of north London, discovered that things were not that simple. She had to wait ten months for the claim to be settled and, worse, the mortgage lender, Abbey National, still refused to release her deeds because, it said, she owed £263.18 in unpaid interest. Mrs Barrons was, therefore, being punished for a delay for which she was in no way responsible.

She had sent all relevant documentation, including an interim death certificate, within days of her husband's death. But Abbey says it is normal practice to continue charging interest on any loan until it is repaid, regardless of the circumstances. Friends Provident, the insurer, would not pay out until the results of the inquest were known, it added. The inquest was held on July 28. The coroner's notes appear to have turned up in early October. FP says it did not receive the claim form from Abbey until November.

The final payout was £18,039.37, including interest backdated to January 15. This was not enough to cover the outstanding debt because, while the insurer paid interest at 5 per cent, Abbey was charging interest at the prevailing mortgage rate, currently 8.34 per cent. The longer the delay, therefore, the greater the discrepancy between the payout and the amount owed.

Abbey and FP both say that they normally advise people in Mrs Barrons's position to continue with monthly interest payments until the claim has been settled. Mrs Barrons denies receiving such advice, but points out that, as her husband was the main breadwinner and she earns very little, she could not have afforded to continue the payments in any case.

Mr Barrons always assumed that the outstanding charges were made in error. "I couldn't understand it. We'd never missed a mortgage payment." Staff at her local Abbey branch appeared to be as confused as she was. "At one point, they said it was all a mistake and I didn't owe anything. Then they changed their minds again and said I did."

Four weeks ago, her branch sent a fax to the bank's Arkley mortgage centre asking why there was still an outstanding balance on the mortgage. It stated: "This needs to be sorted out urgently as Mrs Barrons did phone Arkley before Christmas... The person to whom she spoke said that this would be investigated and promised to phone Mrs Barrons the next day. Mrs Barrons did not hear from the person at Arkley... Obviously, this is a very distressing matter and it needs to be sorted out so that Mrs Barrons can at least forget about the worry about the outstanding mortgage."

The only response Mrs Barrons has received since then is a demand for £1.47 a month for the next 20 years.

On Monday, Weekend Money took up her case. After a series of phone conversations, Abbey finally issued the following statement: "We accept that there was a breakdown in communication at the



Josephine Barrons, centre, with her daughters, Jacqueline, and Kim, right

end of last year and, therefore, as a gesture of goodwill, we are prepared to write off the outstanding balance of the mortgage.

"As a responsible lender, we could not assume the loan was paid off until we received the funds from the Friends Provident endowment."

There was no mention of any compensation for distress, but Mrs Barrons will now at least receive her deeds.

Comment, page 27

## BRIEFINGS

The fourteenth *Directory of Grant-Making Trusts*, published by the Charities Aid Foundation, is larger and more detailed than before. The directory, which costs £53, should help fundraisers and grant-seekers to pinpoint charities most likely to fund their charitable projects. There are three new subdivisions: medicine and health, children and youth, and social welfare.

Card crime in ski resorts is climbing, according to Card Protection Plan, Europe's card protection services provider. CPP estimates that 2,500 plastic cards were lost or stolen on skiing holidays last year. CPP provides specific card protection cover that ensures all cards are cancelled within 20 seconds, replacement cards are produced, and emergency cash of up to £750 is made available within hours. At £7 a year per person, or £12 for a couple, CPP's policy covers all cards. Telephone: 0171-352 7755.

Beale Dobie has launched a Portfolio Valuation Service to provide an up-to-date actuarial valuation of traded endowment policy portfolios. The valuations can be produced on a monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annual basis. There is a minimum valuation fee of £100. Telephone: 01621 851133.

Halifax Building Society has launched Building for the Future, an educative initiative to help young people to make financial and career decisions. The series of five videos, available free on request to UK secondary schools, is aimed at the 15 plus age group. The series covers 65 careers. A new edition of *The Next Step*, a careers and information guide for 1995 school-leavers, has also been published by the Halifax. Telephone: 01422 333333.

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An offer of Units in the Airways Residential Authorised Property Unit Trust at an initial offer price of £1.00 per Unit by the Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited, a member of IMRO and regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. All assets of the Unit Trust, which is the first residential property unit trust to be authorised by the Securities and Investments Board, will be held in trust for unit holders by the Trustee, Barclays Bank Plc.

## KEY POINTS AT A GLANCE

- Potential for income and capital growth from investment in rented residential property concentrating on areas benefiting from the expansion of the civil aviation industry.
- First year's estimated annual rental income distribution to investors of 4.5% (gross) expected to rise by RPI each year.
- An investment realisable at just a few days' notice.
- Property investment and management expertise from the Airways Housing Group.

**British Airways** - British Airways Plc, a major employer in the Heathrow area, has stated its support for the objectives of the Airways Unit Trust.

**Established demand at Heathrow** - The money subscribed will be used primarily to purchase a range of good quality housing of conventional construction in an area of high employment and growth prospects around Heathrow. These homes will be appropriate for occupation by people employed in the civil aviation industry, including the engineering, professional and administrative staff of British Airways Plc. Where attractive opportunities to invest in related commercial properties arise these could form a subsidiary part of the investment portfolio.

**Future Growth at Regional Airports** - The Manager also perceives increasing capital values and rental returns available from investment in residential property and commercial property associated with the airline industry near selected regional airports with potential for a high growth rate in passenger traffic.

**Investment Expertise** - The Airways Housing Group Limited is one of the country's major registered housing associations and the holding company of the Airways Housing Group. Established in 1947, it now manages over 4,000 occupancies, including both residential and commercial properties, around major UK airports. It will provide property investment and management services to the Airways Unit Trust.

**Annual Income** - Rental income from the properties will be applied towards payment (after expenses of the Airways Unit Trust) of an annual income distribution estimated to be 4.5% gross in the first full year of operation. Future income distributions are expected to rise by at least the Retail Price Index each year as rents increase.

**Realising Capital Growth** - The price of Units reflects the value of the assets of the Airways Unit Trust. The assets are valued fortnightly and any changes in the value of the properties will be reflected in changes to the price of Units. Investors can realise the value of their Units by giving notice of redemption which will be honoured at the next fortnightly determination of the redemption price. Normally cash payable on redemption will be remitted to investors within four business days of redemption being effected.

**Issue Underwritten** - The Airways Housing Trust PLC has underwritten the minimum subscription of the issue up to £5million, and has also agreed to purchase a total of 100,000 Units at launch in addition to any Units subscribed for individually by Directors of the Manager.

**Enhanced Liquidity** - Liquidity is enhanced because of the unique residential property purchase arrangements negotiated on behalf of the Airways Unit Trust. The Airways Housing Trust PLC, the principal trading company in the Airways Housing Group, can be required, up to a maximum cost of £5million over a period of five years, to buy certain properties at a price equal to the greater of either the then open market value or the original cost plus any change in the Nationwide Building Society Residential Property Index. The sum available is reduced by any amount applied by the Airways Housing Trust PLC in underwriting the initial offer.

**Security of Investment** - Unit holders have the security that all the assets of the Unit Trust will be held in trust by Barclays Bank Plc. This is the first residential property unit trust to be authorised by the Securities and Investments Board (SIB). The Manager is a member of IMRO and regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

**Minimum Investment** - The minimum investment is a £500 lump sum, each Unit being at a fixed price of £1 during the initial offer period which commenced at 5 p.m. on Friday 20th January 1995 and expires at 5 p.m. on Friday 10th February 1995. Alternatively, investors can save from as little as £50 a month through the Airways Regular Savings Plan by direct debit. For full details, and a copy of the full prospectus, please call Freephone 0800 210248.

**AIR MILES Offer** - Free AIR MILES awards with every £2,000 initial lump sum subscription and thereafter on investments of £1,000 or more, where subscriptions are received before the expiry of the initial offer period.

## Summary of Risk Factors

The Manager believes that the following risk factors are relevant to this investment:

- As the Unit Trust is a property fund, investors should be aware that they may not be able to realise their investment in the Unit Trust when they choose because the property in the Unit Trust may not always be readily saleable and, during periods when it is not readily saleable, the Manager may refuse to repurchase an investor's units. As a result of this, the Unit Trust may be suitable only for those investors who have capital which may be committed on a long-term basis.
- There could be a change in the scope of the legislation affecting either assured tenancies or unit trusts. The Manager considers that such changes in legislation are unlikely to affect existing tenancies. However, any new lettings, and the management of the Airways Unit Trust itself, would have to follow any revised rules and this could affect the future performance of the Airways Unit Trust.
- The capital growth available to investors will principally depend upon the performance of the residential property market. The valuation of underlying property assets of the Airways Unit Trust is generally a matter of the opinion of the Standing Independent Valuer, and not of fact. The capital value of Units can go down as well as up, and past performance is no guarantee of future performance. An investor may not therefore realise on redemption of his Units the sum originally invested.
- The yield to investors depends upon there being a sufficient supply of tenants for the properties, upon rent levels remaining stable and property management costs not exceeding income. Income yields can go down as well as up.
- For investors wishing to dispose of their Units, the realisation of their investment may in part depend upon the ability of The Airways Housing Trust PLC to meet its property purchase obligations under the arrangements detailed earlier. However, investors should take note of the agreement of The Airways Housing Trust PLC to place £5million in a secure deposit account at Barclays Bank Plc, the reducing balance of which after any such purchase will be available for up to 5 years after the launch of the Airways Unit Trust. In circumstances where property comprised in the Airways Unit Trust, is not readily saleable, the Manager may defer redemption of Units for a limited period in accordance with the Regulations.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### The Investment Strategy

The investment strategy is to purchase homes of conventional construction, typically costing between £40,000 - £200,000, in major areas of civil aviation employment such as Heathrow. The Airways Unit Trust may also purchase housing of a higher value and other properties such as short term residential or training accommodation. Later it is intended to target regional airports where there is high growth potential and also to diversify into related commercial property that will benefit from the need of airports for locally based high technology support industries.

### Annual Income Distribution

The experience of the Airways Housing Group, which already manages thousands of homes, including 600 purchased with funds raised under the Business Expansion Scheme, indicates that the first year annual income distribution to investors in the Airways Unit Trust is likely to be 4.5% gross.

Typical purchase price including on-costs of a two bedroom family house in the Heathrow area	£72,000	Net rent after management costs and overheads	£3,240	Estimated first year annual income distribution 4.5% to unit holders.
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As an example, this estimate cannot be guaranteed. The actual distribution may be more, or less.

The following estimate for the first year annual income distribution has been prepared by the Manager on the basis of the following:

- £10 million of funds under management during the first year of which 80% is invested in residential property, 10% in shares of quoted property companies and 10% in money market cash deposits.
- Gross investment income of 6% per annum on cash deposits.
- The typical purchase price of a two-bedroom family house includes £2,000 allowed for survey, legal costs, initial repairs and administration. The £70,000 acquisition price is derived from the Airways Housing Group's market intelligence on purchases of similar houses in the Heathrow area during the first nine months of 1994.
- The residential property assets comprise an average of 110 such houses at any one time during the first year of operation.
- Each house is rented out during the whole year at a gross rent of £4,680 per annum, from which £1,440 per annum is applied against net losses, management costs, maintenance costs and a proportion of the total overheads of the Airways Unit Trust which are spread over the total receipts of the Airways Unit Trust both from rentals and money market deposits.
- Corporation tax on gross income of the Airways Unit Trust has been assumed at the basic corporate rate of 20%.
- No account has been taken of changes in the value of properties held.
- The estimated distribution is that available to a Unit holder who has not elected for income to be reinvested and is stated before tax, in the hands of the unit holder.

It is expected that rents, and hence yields to investors, will increase over time at the rate of price inflation and more probably in line with the usually higher rate of earnings inflation. This should mean that your investment will be "inflation protected" with increases in the yield equal over time to increases in the cost of living. This compares favourably with index linked government stocks, which provide a substantially lower income and are only linked to price inflation.

## Charges and Expenses

The Manager's preliminary charge, which is included in the issue price of each Unit, including the initial offer price of £1, is currently 5.5% of the creation price of each Unit. The trust deed constituting the Airways Unit Trust permits a maximum preliminary charge of 7.5%. The Manager is also entitled under the trust deed to make a periodic charge, not exceeding 1.25% per annum, which accrues daily and is calculated on the value of the property of the Airways Unit Trust in accordance with the Regulations. The current periodic charge is 0.9% per annum. Any increase in the preliminary or the periodic charge within the maximum specified can only be made after giving written notice to the Trustee and Unit holders and after making available, for 90 days, scheme particulars in relation to the Airways Unit Trust amended to reflect the increase. The Trustee is entitled to receive out of the property of the Airways Unit Trust for its own account a periodic fee (exclusive of transaction costs), which is calculated on a scale reflecting the value of the property of the Airways Unit Trust and is currently 0.1% per annum for the first £5million in value of the property of the Airways Unit Trust and 0.08% per annum on any amount over £5million in value. This fee accrues on a daily basis and is payable on the last business day in each month.

All costs and expenses of The Airways Housing Trust PLC for the provision by it of residential property management services will be discharged from the property of the Airways Unit Trust in accordance with the Regulations. The costs and expenses of The Airways Housing Trust PLC in the provision of property investment services will be discharged by the Manager from the fees received by it in accordance with the provisions described above.

On expiry of the initial offer period, a third party investment manager may be appointed with specific responsibility for that part of the property of the Airways Unit Trust which may, in accordance with the Regulations and the Manager's investment policy, be invested in the securities of listed property companies. Details of the terms of such an appointment, if made, including as to remuneration, will be available from the Manager and comprised in the Scheme Particulars of the Airways Unit Trust.

## Commission

Commission of 2.25% will be paid by the Manager to authorised advisers or intermediaries.

## Your Investment Choices

### Minimum Investment

The minimum investment is £500 and this or a larger sum can be invested as a lump sum or through a savings plan. If you choose to enter into a savings plan, the minimum commitment is £50 per month by direct debit. The two plans can be combined by depositing an initial lump sum and following it up with a savings plan to increase the number of Units held.

### Special Fixed Price

Valid applications received before 5 p.m. on Friday 10th February 1995 will purchase Units at the initial fixed price of £1 each. Valid applications received after that date will purchase Units at the purchase price at the next Valuation Point following receipt of the funds. No interest is payable on monies received and held pending purchase of Units.

### Distributions or Reinvestment

You can choose to have your annual income distribution sent to you by cheque or direct to your bank. The income distribution date will be 31st March in each year commencing 31st March 1996.

If you wish, the income can be reinvested in further Units and this investment will be made by the Manager at the mid-price between the redemption price and the purchase price at a special valuation point immediately preceding the distribution date. If you wish to take advantage of this option, tick the reinvestment box on the application form.

## Taxation of Unit holders

Distributions will be made with a tax credit equivalent to the lower rate of income tax which may be reclaimed from the Inland Revenue by non-tax payers, subject to their tax status. Higher rate tax payers will be assessed directly by the Inland Revenue for the difference.

A Unit holder is potentially liable to tax on income and tax on capital gains. A Unit holder will normally receive an income distribution which carries a tax credit at the lower rate of tax. In the case of the first distribution made in respect of units issued during that accounting period, the amount representing the income equalisation is a return of capital. Whilst it is not taxable as income, the amount must be deducted from the cost of units in computing any capital gain made on the disposal of units. When an income distribution is made to a unit holder, which will take place on or before each annual income payment date, each Unit holder will receive a tax voucher showing the applicable tax credit (at the lower rate of tax in respect of the distribution which will enable the correct income to be shown on the individual unit holder's tax return. Non-tax payers are entitled to reclaim the tax credit from the Inland Revenue. Lower and basic rate taxpayers will have no further tax to pay. Higher rate taxpayers, however, will have further tax to pay. The further amount payable will be the difference between the higher rate of tax on the gross distribution and the lower rate of tax. The gross distribution is the amount of the distribution plus the tax credit. Unit holders disposing of Units may be liable to capital gains tax if their net chargeable gains from all sources in the relevant tax year exceed the exempt amount. For the 1995-96 tax year the exempt amount is £6,000. References to taxation are to United Kingdom taxation only and are based on the Manager's understanding of United Kingdom law and revenue practices as at the date of this document. The nature, basis and rates of taxation and availability of relevant reliefs may vary. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the foregoing comments on taxation, no responsibility can be taken by the Manager for its interpretation and prospective Unit holders should seek their own professional advice.

## Appendix of Prescribed Information

- The Manager of the Unit Trust is Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited. The Manager is a member of IMRO regulated by the Personal Investment Authority, and is a member of the Airways Housing Group. The Trustee is Barclays Bank Plc of 1 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3AH, a member of IMRO. Property management services will be provided by The Airways Housing Trust PLC.
- Units can be bought at prices determined with reference to the Valuation Point on each dealing day following acceptance of a purchase application. Units may be sold at prices determined with reference to the Valuation Point on each dealing day following acceptance of a redemption request. The maximum issue and minimum redemption prices will be published daily in the Financial Times and Daily Telegraph. No maximum purchase or minimum redemption price is stipulated in the trust deed of the Unit Trust, but the Manager may vary the price of Units within stipulated limits in accordance with the Regulations.
- The Valuation Point is noon on each dealing day at which time the price at which Units may be purchased or redeemed by the Manager will be determined. Real property held within the Unit Trust is valued by the Standing Independent Valuer on the basis of a full valuation with physical inspection at least once a year and a valuation on the basis of a review in accordance with the Regulations of the last full valuation fortnightly. Other property is valued fortnightly in accordance with the Regulations.
- The gross yield is the expected annual income before tax, but after deduction of expenses, from the assets of the Unit Trust. The gross yield expressed as a percentage of the purchase price, and is shown before the deduction of taxation, but after all other charges, and is published with the prospectus and purchase price. The gross yield is not a measure of capital growth in the value of assets held by the Unit Trust.
- Units may, at the request of an investor, be issued either on terms that annual net income distribution will be automatically reinvested in the purchase of further Units, or on terms that annual income (net of basic rate tax) will be distributed to the investor. The income payment date for Units in the Unit Trust is 31st March in each year commencing 31st March 1996. Units subscribed for under the terms of the Regular Savings Plan Units are allocated at the purchase price determined at the next following Valuation Point. Units purchased through the reinvestment of income will be allocated at the price determined at a special annual valuation point for this purpose. The annual accounting date of the Unit Trust is 31st January in each year.
- Applications to buy or sell Units can be made between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. on any business day. Applications for redemption may be calculated with reference to the next following Valuation Point. On a sale of Units payment will in normal circumstances be made within four business days of receiving a properly renounced Unit Certificate in the case of lump sum holdings, or written instructions in the case of holdings within the Regular Savings Plan. When instructions are received to sell Units, a contract note will be despatched by the Manager within 24 hours of the transaction being effected. When instructions are received to purchase a Unit, a contract note will be despatched by the Manager within 24 hours of the redemption being effected. The Unit certificate should be received within 21 days of the purchase being completed.
- No right to cancel an application for Units arises under the Financial Services (Cancellation) Rules 1989. However, the investor does have the right to stop contributions to the Regular Savings Plan or sell investments at any time. The legal right to cancel may arise where Units are purchased following advice received from an authorised intermediary, and the relevant cancellation notice will be provided by the Manager.
- Further details concerning the Airways Unit Trust are contained in the Scheme Particulars which are available from the Manager at 1 Douglas Road, Stanwell, Staines, Middlesex, TW19 7QS. The Manager's six monthly and annual reports may when available be obtained from the same source.

## Terms and Conditions of Application

- The subscription list for the initial offer opened at 5 p.m. on Friday 20th January 1995 and no offer to subscribe for Units shall be capable of acceptance prior to that date and time. The initial offer period will end 21 days thereafter at 5 p.m. on Friday 10th February 1995. No Units will be issued unless the minimum subscription of £5million is achieved.
- The Manager reserves the right:
  - (i) to present all cheques for payment on receipt and to retain documents of title and surplus application monies pending clearance of applicants' cheques;
  - (ii) to reject any application or accept any application in part only.
- This payment must be solely for this application. Cheques or banker's drafts must be drawn in sterling on an account or branch in the United Kingdom of a bank which is a member of the London or Scottish Clearing Houses.
- Applications will not be accepted if accompanied by a cheque drawn by someone other than the applicant or joint applicant.
- No interest will be payable on money held pending the issue of Units.
- Certificates will be despatched to the holder (or, in the case of joint holders, to the first-named holder) at the address appearing on the Application Form within 21 days of expiry of the initial offer period subject to receipt of payment and satisfactory registration details. All cheques, certificates and other documents will be despatched by post at the risk of the persons entitled thereto. Each applicant agrees that, having had the opportunity to read this document, the applicant shall be deemed to have had notice of all information and representations concerning the Airways Unit Trust and the Units contained herein.
- No person receiving a copy of this document and/or Application Form in any territory other than the United Kingdom may treat the same as constituting an invitation to him.

All applications, acceptances and contracts resulting therefrom under this Offer shall be governed and construed in accordance with English law and each applicant submits to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.

## Glossary

- Airways Unit Trust** Airways Residential Authorised Property Unit Trust, a unit trust established on 21st October 1994 under the terms of a deed made between the Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited and the Trustee.
- Airways Housing Group** Airways Housing Group Limited, its subsidiaries and associated companies but excluding (where the context otherwise expressly provides) the Manager.
- business day** Any day (excluding Saturdays and Sundays) upon which banks are open for business in the City of London.
- Dealing Day** The first and the fourth day of each month, where the same are business days and otherwise the business day next following each such day.
- Income Payment Date** 31st March in each year commencing 31st March 1996 being the date on or before which income available for distribution in respect of the preceding accounting period is distributed to unit holders.
- Index of Residential Property Prices** The index of residential property prices published quarterly by the Nationwide Building Society.
- Manager** Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited.
- The Regulations** The Financial Services (Regulated Schemes) Regulations 1991 made by the Securities and Investments Board.
- Scheme Particulars** Particulars of the constitution, objectives and operation of the Unit Trust prescribed in accordance with the Regulations.
- Trustee** Barclays Bank Plc.
- Unit** One share (including fractional) in the Airways Unit Trust.
- The Valuation Point** Noon on each Dealing Day being the time at which the assets held by the Unit Trust are valued for the purpose of determining the redemption and purchase prices of Units.

## PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

- Where you wish to make an initial lump sum investment, insert in figures in box 1 the amount of £1 per Unit for which you are applying. The amount shown should correspond to the amount of your cheques/banker's drafts which should accompany your application. Applications must be for a minimum of 500 Units if you are making an initial lump sum investment.
- Indicate by ticking box 2 if you wish annual income distributions to be reinvested. If you do not tick this box, annual income distributions will be despatched to you.
- Insert in box 3 your full name and address in BLOCK CAPITALS in the spaces provided.
- Sign and date the Application Form in box 4. The Application Form may be signed by someone else on your behalf if duly authorised to do so by the powers of attorney (or formal) authority for duly certified copy thereof must be enclosed for inspection. (Joint applications are acceptable, in this case you should both sign the Application Form and your full names and addresses in block capitals, should be attached on a separate sheet of paper.)
- Please pin your cheques or banker's drafts to your completed Application Form. Your cheques or banker's drafts must be payable to Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited and should be crossed "Account Payee". The cheque should be for your initial investment. Applications will not be accepted if accompanied by a cheque drawn by someone other than the applicant.
- Tick box 5 to confirm your understanding that no interest will be paid on sums received pending issue of Units. SIB regulations stipulate, for the protection of investors, that your express confirmation be given, without which your application cannot be processed.

If you are in any doubt as to the action you should take, you should consult an appropriately authorised professional financial adviser.

For copies of the full Prospectus please call 0800 210248 over the weekend, alternatively call Velda Lawrence or Simon Tattersfield on 0784 247311 Monday to Friday.

## APPLICATION FORM

TT 4.2.95

Please read the Terms and Conditions of Application and the Procedure for Application prior to completing all appropriate sections of the Application Form. Cheques should be made payable to:

Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited and sent to the Managers at C/o Ravensbourne Registration Services Limited, PO Box 832, 199 Bishopsgate, London EC2M 3YT.

1. Amount enclosed for initial investment £ £500 minimum investment £100 free air miles will be despatched for investments over £2,000 plus 50 for every additional £1,000 invested during the initial offer period	2. Income Reinvested <input type="checkbox"/> Please tick, as appropriate.
Gentlemen, I/we irrevocably offer to subscribe for Units on the terms and conditions and subject to the Trust Deed of the Airways Residential Authorised Property Unit Trust. I/we enclose my/our cheques or banker's drafts payable to Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited for the above-mentioned sum being the amount payable on application for the stated number of Units in accordance with the Procedure for Application. I/we agree to accept the same or any lesser number (not less than 500) of Units in respect of which this application may be accepted. In consideration of your agreeing to consider applications on the terms and subject to the conditions opposite, I/we agree that this application shall be irrevocable and that this paragraph shall constitute a collateral contract between me/us and you which shall become binding upon delivery of this Application Form duly completed at the address shown above. (i) request that a definitive certificate for the number of Units in respect of which this application is accepted, together with a cheque, if applicable, for any surplus application money, shall be sent by post at my/our own risk to the address given below or as I/we may otherwise direct. (ii) confirm that the due completion and delivery of this Application Form accompanied by a cheque will constitute an undertaking that the cheque will be honoured on first presentation. (iii) confirm that I am/we are over 18 years of age.	
First names in full <input type="text"/>	
Surname (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms or Title) <input type="text"/>	
Address (in full) <input type="text"/>	
Postcode <input type="text"/>	
Signature <input type="text"/>	
Date <input type="text"/>	
Pin your cheques/banker's drafts for the amount shown above which should be crossed "Account Payee".	
I acknowledge that no interest will be paid on sums received pending issue of Units. Please tick here <input type="checkbox"/>	

TELEPHONE DEALING:

0171-256-5868

Airways

UNIT TRUST

Issued by Airways Unit Trust Managers Limited, Registered Office, 1 Douglas Road, Stanwell, Middlesex, TW19 7QS  
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0171-256-5868

When a former pensioner

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Living retirement topping company pe

The Equit



## THE TIMES WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

## Relief of negative equity a priority

From M. T. James  
Sir, We continue to hear much through your columns about the plight of people with negative equity.

I cannot believe I am alone in my view that it is time something more was done to alleviate this problem. I am acquainted with several young families in this situation and have seen the desolation it brings. Even if they keep their homes, many of them will continue to feel the effects throughout the greater proportion of their lives, unless of course there is a miraculous recovery in the market.

What particularly concerns me, in addition to the human angle, is that there are so many of them, almost a generation of the workforce on whom we depend for the future.

Undoubtedly, these people must bear some responsibility for their own actions, but equally, so must the Government which created the conditions that few could anticipate.

It also seems to be accepted that building societies were at fault in allowing people to borrow beyond reason. It is astounding and seems almost immoral that the Government, by its actions, now seems intent on making matters worse. At the same time, the major building societies are planning mergers and restructuring which seem to offer little benefit to borrowers.

Would it not be entirely reasonable that Government and building societies should combine forces to ameliorate the problem, through a combination of tax and cash offsets?

In this way, the Government could hope to redeem itself and the building societies demonstrate that perhaps they really do give priority to the long-term interests of the housing market.  
Yours faithfully,  
M. T. JAMES,  
21 Woodsheds Road,  
Malvern,  
Worcester.

## When a former wife's loss of pension seems unfair

From Dr James Gibson

Sir, I found your article about pensions and divorce (Weekend Money, January 14) very interesting and I wonder whether you are aware of yet another major injustice that takes place when some of us are divorced.

I worked as a teacher and lecturer and retired at 62. I had been married for most of my career and had paid extra pension contributions so that my wife would receive half of my pension when I died. Unfortunately, my marriage broke up shortly after I re-

tired, and several years later I decided to marry again. I was then told by the Department of Education & Science Pensions Department in Darlington that on second marriage my ex-wife would, because of the divorce, lose the half share of the pension she might otherwise have expected. Nor would my second wife have any entitlement to a share of my pension.

I accept that a second wife might expect nothing as all my pension payments were made during the period of my first marriage, but that my ex-wife should lose her right to a pension on my death seems grossly unfair.

Couldn't it be said that it is an administrative decision that encourages people to live in what used to be called sin?

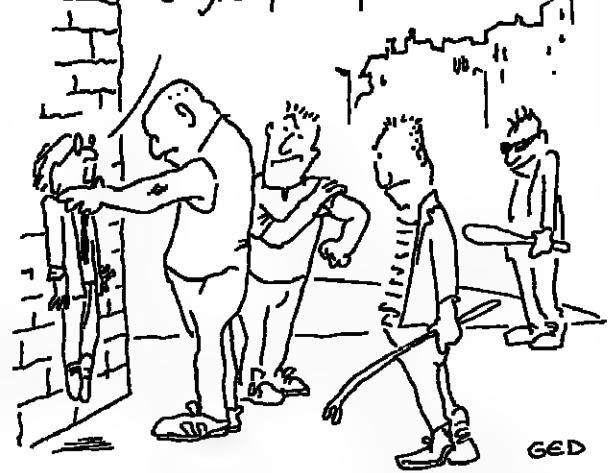
I suspect that we are not alone in being so badly treated.

Incidentally, as I am ten years older than my ex-wife, the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be laughing all the way to the bank.

Yours sincerely,  
JAMES GIBSON,  
21 Abbot's Walk,  
Cerne Abbas,  
Dorchester.

Letters or information for Weekend Money may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5082. They should include a daytime number. The Times regrets that it cannot always give individual replies or advice and asks that original documents are not sent in. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.

We, the OAPs, should be grateful that you, the YOBs, have formed a group to protect us



## Identity crisis over bank accounts

From J. Fox

Sir, I have been reading with great interest the letters about the problems some people have been having in order to prove their identity just to open an account with a bank or a building society.

I cannot drive, I have never been abroad and I am not a property owner, and so I do not have any of the documents required by banks and building societies to open an account. All household bills are paid by my partner.

I do have a birth certificate, but the name on it is different

from the one I have used since I left school 40 years ago. I have not worked for several years and I do not receive any pension or unemployment benefit.

So, if I want to open an account, how can I prove I'm me? As I seem to have an identity problem, perhaps it could be argued I am an example of an argument for the introduction of national identity cards!

Yours faithfully,  
J. FOX,  
4 Albion Street,  
Portlisle, East Sussex.

## Bill gives control to those who pose threat to pensioners

From Mr Don Langford

Sir, There is before Parliament a Pensions Bill which is intended to produce legislation to protect the rights of pensioners. It will have a considerable effect upon every person in this country. There is, however, a worrying silence surrounding the publication of this Bill.

The Government is keen to preserve the application of trust law to the proposed legislation and I have no disagreement with that. I would, however, expect the trustees of pension schemes to include at least one pensioner. One would not be unreasonable in thinking that at least 50 per cent of the trustees should be appointed from pensioners, whose money, after all, is the purpose of the trust. But that is not to be! The proposed legislation fails to provide for even one pensioner to be a trustee unless he or she forms part of the 33 per cent of member-nominated trustees.

In a briefing which the DSS has issued to MPs, against the question "Will there be pensioner trustees?" they advise: "If each group of beneficiaries is to have a right to appoint a trustee, then trustees will increasingly be seen as representatives of those who appoint them, thus weakening the ability of the trustees to function

collectively as a board. What is important is to have trustees who are not appointed by management... Schemes should not be required to appoint pensioner trustees but should be encouraged to consider including pensioner trustees on the board." I suspect that the cuckoo must have arrived early!

This is, however, a serious matter as anyone who has suffered as a result of the Robert Maxwell affair, and many others in similar situations, will testify. We must make it known to MPs that we cannot accept such legislation: by giving employers 66 per cent of voting rights, the Bill will hand complete control over schemes' assets to the very people that the legislation is intended to protect pensioners against!

It is no good making thousands of people take early retirement and not expecting them to take a much more active interest in their pensions than was the case ten or even five years ago.

Yours faithfully,  
DON LANGFORD  
(Chairman),  
English China Clays  
Executive Retirement Benefits  
Scheme Pensioners'  
Association,  
20 Sea Road, Carlyn Bay,  
St Austell, Cornwall.

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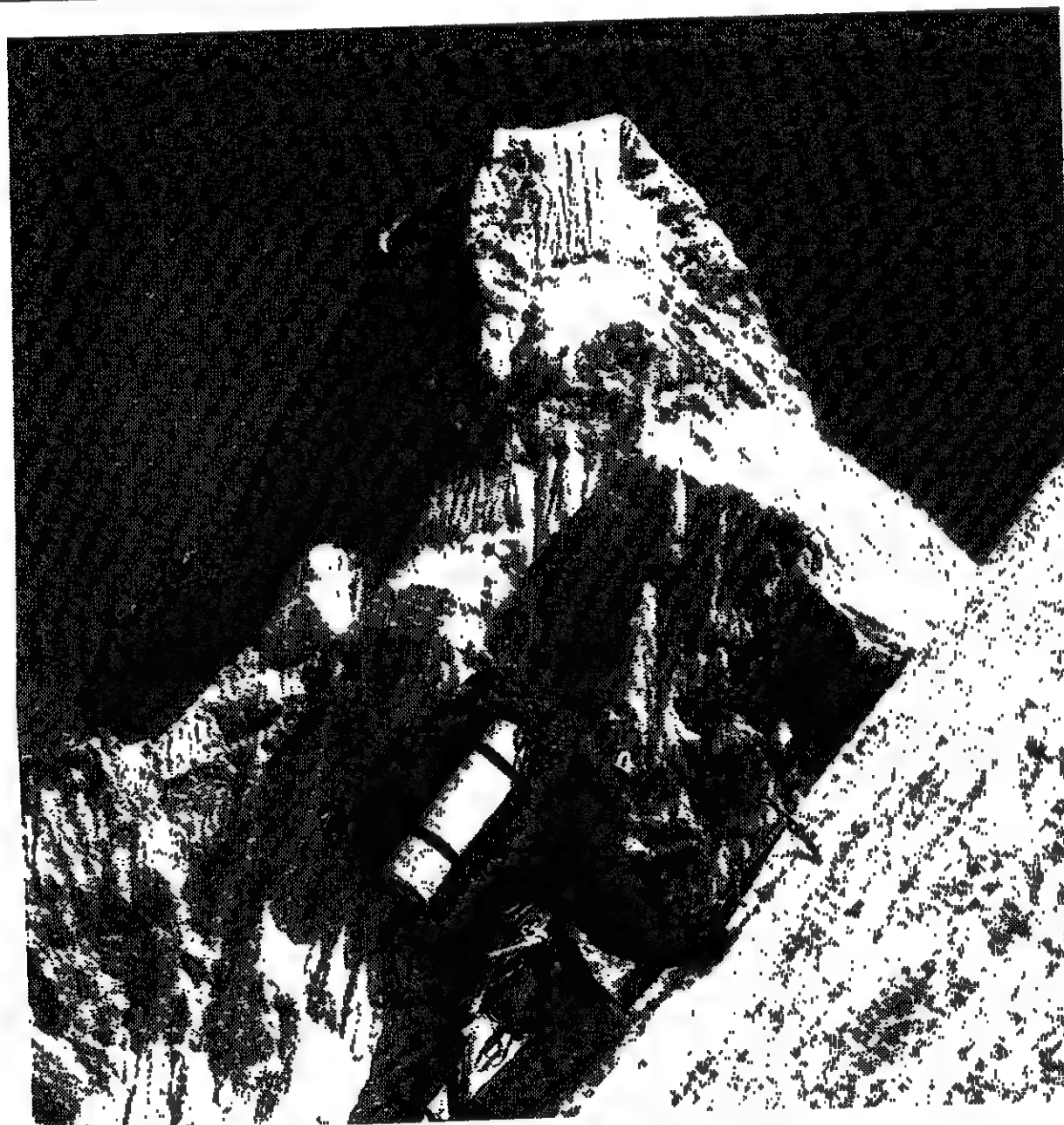


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\*Sherwood/Planned Savings awards, September 1994. All statistics are to 2nd January 1995 and are on an offer-to-bid basis with gross income reinvested (source: Micropal). Current tax levels and reliefs are liable to change and their value will depend on your individual circumstances. The value of an investment and the income from it can go down as well as up (this may partly be the result of exchange rate fluctuations) and you may not get back the amount invested. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance.

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This is the one to pick if you are looking for capital growth and would like a spread of international investments.

The Growth Option invests in the PEP Growth Fund, which has risen by 91.5% in the last five years and is 5th in its sector of similar funds.

2.

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If your main priority is income, then this may be the option for you. The Income Option invests in the High Income Fund, which focuses mainly on the UK stockmarket.

Over the last five years the fund has risen by 108.5% and leads its sector of similar funds.

3.

### THE GLOBAL OPTION

This Option offers a choice from our award-winning international range of unit trusts. The average rise of all the applicable funds within the Option is 73.7% in the last five years.

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PO Box 131, Perpetual House, 47-49 Station Road,  
Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 1AF. Please send me further details on your 94/95 Perpetual PEP.  
Important: please print clearly.

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To: The Equitable Life, FREEPOST, Wilton Street, AYLESBURY, Bucks HP21 7BR

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# It is still a buyers' market for loans

HOW can you tell that it is still a buyers' market for loans? By the number of fixed rates and discounts that lenders are offering to borrowers of higher standard mortgage rates, and the number of people into the market.

The Yorkshire Building Society is offering first-time buyers a 7 per cent discount off its variable rate of 8.44 per cent for six months, followed by a 3 per cent discount for the next six months. Existing borrowers and those remortgaging can get a discount of 1.9 per cent for three years if they have a deposit of up to 25 per cent of the purchase price. If they have more than 25 per cent of the purchase price to put down as a deposit, the discount is 2 per cent for three years. There is an arrangement fee of £100. If you cash in the loan in the first two years, there is a penalty of six months' gross interest. If you cash in after the first two years, the penalty is three months' gross interest.

The Bradford & Bingley Building Society has increased its one-year discounts for new borrowers. Those with a deposit for 25 per cent or more of the purchase price will get 5.3 per cent off the standard rate, giving them a rate

of 3.15 per cent. Those borrowing between 90 per cent and 95 per cent of the property's price will get a discount of 4.65 per cent. There are also discounts of over two or three years. Coventry Building Society has new fixed rates and discounts for all customers buying or remortgaging. Remortgagers can take a two-year fixed rate of 6.95 per cent with £600 cashback towards valuation or legal fees or £250 cashback plus free remortgage legal package worth £600. The society also has a two-year discount of 2.50 per cent with £600 cashback or cashback/ legal fees package. First-time buyers have a one-year discount of 6.4 per cent with cashback of £300 and existing borrowers moving can have a 1.75 per cent discount for four years with £300 cashback.

■ NatWest is offering a fixed rate of 6.99 per cent until June 30, 1997, and £400 cashback on new mortgage applications. The offer holds for both new customers and existing mortgage holders applying for a loan before February 28. First-time buyers and existing customers will not be charged the £250 arrangement fee.

SARA MCCONNELL

## CGT ALLOWANCES - DECEMBER '94

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in December 1994

Month	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
January	0.767	0.881	0.601	0.517	0.480	0.413	0.408
February	0.760	0.874	0.586	0.511	0.454	0.408	0.408
March	0.757	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
April	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
May	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
June	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
July	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
August	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
September	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
October	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
November	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
December	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408

The 11 month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

Life Assurance	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
January	0.767	0.881	0.601	0.517	0.480	0.413	0.408
February	0.760	0.874	0.586	0.511	0.454	0.408	0.408
March	0.757	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
April	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
May	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
June	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
July	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
August	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
September	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
October	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
November	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
December	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408

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April	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
May	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
June	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
July	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
August	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
September	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
October	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
November	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408
December	0.758	0.873	0.587	0.509	0.451	0.408	0.408

## SAVERS' BEST BUYS

Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS				
Yorkshire BS 0800 378836	1st Class Acc	£1,000	5.95	Yy
Stilton BS 0756 705141	3 High Street	£2,000	6.00	Yy
Britannia BS 01533 705141	Capital Trust	£10,000	6.35	Yy
Northern Rock BS 0500 506000	Go Direct	£20,000	6.90	Yy

Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
FIXED RATES				
Halifax BS 01422 333333	Guaranteed Res	2yr bond	£2,000	8.10
Britannia BS 0800 289555	3 year Fixed	£2,000	8.75	F/y
Co-operative Bank 0800 125100	Fixed Rate Bond	3yr bond	£2,000	9.25
Bristol & West BS 01179 294271	Fixed Rate Bond	5yr bond	£5,000	8.70

Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
TESSAS (TAX FREE)				
Britannia BS 0800 289555	5 year	£8,200	9.25	F/y
Hindcote & Rugby BS 01455 251234	5 year	£3,000 A	7.65	Yy
Holmesdale BS 01737 245716	5 year	£1	7.40	Yy
Tipton & Cooley BS 0121 557 2551	5 year	£1	7.35	Yy

## CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Robert Fleming S&P 0800 282101	1.00%	14.60%	£12
Royal Bank of Scotland 01702 348393	1.25%	16.00%	N/C
Alliance & Leicester 0500 500250	1.375%	16.90%	£10 E

## PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance	APR	£100.83	£103.14	£103.77	£105.33
Northern Bank (NI) 01232 245277	13.90%				
Midland Bank 0345 180185	15.40%				
Abbey National 01908 680140	15.90%				
Clydesdale Bank 0141 223 2216	16.20%				

No. A - Fee/charge required. In the interest paid column. C = no interest free period D = annual fee rebated £1.5K+ charged per annum E = Annual fee waived for 1st year for new accounts F = fixed rate (all other rates are variable); OM denotes interest paid on maturity

\* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

Sources: Moneyfacts, The Money Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01882 500 688)

## PIBS

### FIXED RATE

Gross coupon	Buying price	Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	88.25	10.489	100.17
Bradford & Bingley	11.025%	113.25	10.265	102.13
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	128.00	10.317	102.20
Bristol & West	13.750%	127.50	10.480	100.34
Britannia	13.000%	124.00	10.484	100.42
Cheltenham & Glos	11.750%	116.00	10.129	100.86
Coventry	12.125%	114.50	10.574	100.75
First National	11.750%	103.00	11.408	100.25
Halifax	8.750%	87.50	10.000	100.62
Halifax	12.000%	119.00	10.084	100.28
Leeds Permanent	13.625%	135.00	10.089	100.00
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	126.50	10.573	100.23
Newcastle	10.750%	102.125	10.152	100.22
Newcastle	12.625%	120.75	10.455	100.45
Northern Rock	12.625%	120.75	10.455	100.45
Skipton	12.875%	121.75	10.575	100.48

### FLOATING RATE

Gross coupon	Buying price	Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase
First National	8.8675%	101.00	100.00	1,000
Cheshire	8.8854%	103.00	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent Interest-Bearing Shares  
Source: Moneyfacts, The Money Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01882 500 688)

## GOLD BULLION

		Base	
		New	
		012	
		NY	
		034	







Day	Time	Activity	Notes
1	0800	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
2	0600	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
3	0700	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
4	0900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
5	1000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
6	1100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
7	1200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
8	1300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
9	1400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
10	1500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
11	1600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
12	1700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
13	1800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
14	1900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
15	2000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
16	2100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
17	2200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
18	2300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
19	2400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
20	2500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
21	2600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
22	2700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
23	2800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
24	2900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
25	3000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
26	3100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
27	3200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
28	3300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
29	3400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
30	3500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
31	3600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
32	3700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
33	3800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
34	3900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
35	4000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
36	4100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
37	4200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
38	4300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
39	4400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
40	4500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
41	4600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
42	4700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
43	4800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
44	4900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
45	5000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
46	5100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
47	5200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
48	5300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
49	5400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
50	5500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
51	5600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
52	5700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
53	5800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
54	5900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
55	6000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
56	6100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
57	6200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
58	6300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
59	6400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
60	6500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
61	6600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
62	6700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
63	6800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
64	6900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
65	7000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
66	7100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
67	7200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
68	7300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
69	7400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
70	7500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
71	7600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
72	7700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
73	7800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
74	7900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
75	8000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
76	8100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
77	8200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
78	8300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
79	8400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
80	8500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
81	8600	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
82	8700	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
83	8800	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
84	8900	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
85	9000	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife
86	9100	Arrival at camp	Set up tents, unpack gear
87	9200	Breakfast	Check weather, plan route
88	9300	Depart camp	Follow trail, observe wildlife
89	9400	Arrival at destination	Set up camp, rest
90	9500	Depart destination	Follow trail, observe wildlife

[illegible]

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direct from resorts  
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- ITALY -  
- AUSTRIA -  
- SWITZERLAND -  
**WEATHERLINE**  
**891 333 462**  
comprehensive weather  
info for the week ahead



# Former rivals unite to forge a formidable alliance

## Mansell chases winning formula

By Oliver Holt

THERE is a well-known phenomenon in Formula One motor racing called Ron-Speak. It means the use of any number of largely unrecognisable and often meaningless English words and phrases by a driver, usually to distract his opponent. Yesterday seemed a perfect occasion for its implementation, when he announced at last that Nigel Mansell would be driving for McLaren this season.

Instead, something strange happened. Dennis admitted he had had misgivings about Mansell and said their first meeting had been "catastrophic", but the refreshing candour with which he talked spoke volumes for the blossoming relationship between them.

With representatives of Mercedes, his new engine partners looking on, Dennis began justifying his signing of Mansell on a one-year contract that is thought to be worth about £7 million to the 32-year-old champion, who has won more races than the rest of present crop of grand prix drivers combined.

He explained away his past assertion that he would never employ a driver he did not understand and that he did not understand Mansell, even summoning echoes of his stubborn relationship with Ayrton Senna by revealing that he and Mansell had been so determined not to budge on their respective positions over wages that they had agreed to give the £100,000 that separated them to charity.

"We are very different characters," Dennis said, "and a lot of people are aware of the opinions I expressed on Nigel in the past. What became clear in our second meeting is that Nigel brings a unique style to grand prix racing. You have got to look behind the split personality, you have to look at the dedication he brings."

"I prefer the committed Nigel Mansell to the somewhat extrovert and flamboyant race-winner that I have seen up to now. He has achieved many things in his life already and he has a public face. I wanted to see behind that face but it takes time."

Mansell seemed to be inspired by this bout of psycho-



Mansell, in London to announce his deal with McLaren yesterday, says he is driven by a burning desire to win

analysis and responded by claiming he had never been more motivated than he was now. "The sheer excitement of the future is what drives me on," he said. "I cannot stop the fire burning. All the motivation and the fire is there like never before. I feel it, I sense it, I want it."

Mansell was keen to emphasise that he had tried to persuade Dennis to sign him on a longer contract and that he had no intention of retiring at the end of the coming

season. Although neither he nor his team-mate, Mika Häkkinen, has been given preferential status, it was clear from Mansell's phrasing of certain replies that he expected to be the dominant figure in the team, that he expected to formulate some sort of challenge for the championship.

"It is not a question of 'will we win this year', it is a question of when we will win. I tried to negotiate an option for two more years on my contract because I did not

want to come back and get everything right and then have to hand to the car over. But I have the personal word of Ron that if everything is going OK, there is no reason to change the driver line-up next year."

Mansell's recruitment to the ranks of Formula One raises the quota of British drivers to a new high. There are now six, with David Coulthard and Damon Hill at Williams, Eddie Irvine at Jordan, Johnny Herbert at Benetton and Mar-

tin Brundle at Ligier. All have realistic hopes of winning races in what is promising to be one of the most closely fought championships of recent years.

In the past, it seemed impossible that Mansell and McLaren would form an all-British challenge. "We used to be arch-rivals," Mansell said. "Whenever McLaren was the car to front, I was usually second. Now that we are together we should be a formidable partnership."

# Cantona just a scapegoat since society is to blame

SIMON BARNES

On Saturday



L'AFFAIRE Cantona has divided a nation. Mostly this is a simple debate between Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells ("Ban him until the last trumpet") and Facious of Oxbridge ("Fancy a footballer having read a book?"). Both sides have succeeded in out-Cantonaing Cantona, the first in uncontrolled rage, the second in bogus philosophising. Now a third party enters the debate: the academic footballing romantic, a throwback to the Sixties and the days of Marty Feldman, author of *Sado-Masochism in the 4-2-4 System*.

Manchester Metropolitan University's Institute of Popular Culture speaks out through its director, Derek Wynne: "The FA tribunal should be mindful of the signals that their decision will send to players, fans and their clubs. Should Cantona and Manchester United be made scapegoats for an incident initiated by an apparent xenophobic and criminal convicted of attempted armed robbery? The FA must be careful their decision does not demean this season's competitions through ensuring a victory for xenophobic abuse."

As for moi, I have a question. Why did Cantona become a national villain for kicking a lout at a football match and Norman Reddy, a rugby player, a national hero for punching a similar lout on the tube?

## Far from home

The Australians still play domestic cricket in between bouts of getting stuffed by the Poms, and the Victoria state side is heading the Sheffield Shield table. In fact, they are on course to win the right to stage the final at their home ground in March. At the historic MCG, right? Er, no. The Melbourne Cricket Ground has long been booked on the date for a Rolling Stones concert. The Victoria side must seek satisfaction at the Junction Oval instead. What next? Madonna at Lord's, no doubt.

## Just not cricket

Do you know why Australian cricketers are so rough and rugged and generally beast-

ly? Simple. They don't have Oxbridge types playing the game. I should have worked that out for myself; instead, I am indebted to Geoff Lovell, former Oxford captain of 1992 and winner of the inaugural Bradman scholarship. He also took a first in PPE and is a leading contender for the 1995 Young Fogey of the Year Award. He writes in the *Cricket College Association Register*: "The common argument that if England is serious about toughness and standards, then it must abolish the first-class status of university cricket, does not sit with me. In Australia, where

named after Simpson's nickname. Juicefine phonecards are now on sale at \$10, \$20 and \$32, the last being O.J.'s jersey number. Phonecards are serious "collectables" in the United States; each Juicefine card features a good-old-days image of the Great Man on trial for double murder. Callers hear O.J.'s voice, recorded before the murders took place, and can leave a message ("We love ya, O.J.I."). Mart Bryant, of Sportcomm, has been accused of exploiting the horrors. "I had to be very introspective when all the trouble started," he replied.



## Follicular folly

Let us turn to the real tragedy of the week. Romario, the world's top footballer, is losing his hair. Romario, World Cup-winner with Brazil, recently fleeing Barcelona for Flamengo of Rio and the sweet taste of home is desperately worried that there is no reversing the terrible loss of hair, and he has been visiting specialists to restore both hair and youth. He puts it down to "the tensions of the World Cup, the American adventures, and the anxieties accumulated during a mass-sacrificing experience".

## Hand of God?

Early news from Maradona's managerial career. He is now manager of Racing Club, in Buenos Aires, who recently took on Independiente in what was humorously termed a "friendly". The referee, finally losing patience with Maradona's cultured and measured criticisms of his performance from the bench, sent him off. Independiente won 2-0. After the match, in streets near the stadium, Maradona and some of his players became involved in a Cantona-esque philosophical discussion of events with Independent supporters. One of the supporters ended up in hospital.

## Wait for the pips

Fancy making a telephone call to O.J. Simpson? This is the moment. A company called Sportcomm Inc has done a deal with O.J. to inaugurate the Juicefine,

## COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND'S FIXTURES

### FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated  
"denotes a fixture in progress"

#### FA Cup Round 5

(1) Coventry v Chelsea  
(2) Everton v Norwich  
(3) Ipswich v Crystal Palace  
(4) Leicester v West Ham  
(5) Manchester Utd v Aston Villa  
(6) Nottingham Forest v Liverpool  
(7) QPR v Newcastle  
(8) Sheffield Utd v Arsenal  
(9) Southampton v Man City  
(10) Wimbledon v Leeds

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

#### Endeavour League

(1) Bolton v Wolverhampton  
(2) Bristol City v Barnsley  
(3) Derby v Shrewsbury  
(4) Luton v Oldham  
(5) Middlesbrough v Reading  
(6) Millwall v Gillingham  
(7) Southampton v Watford  
(8) Stoke v Portsmouth  
(9) Sunderland v Port Vale  
(10) Tranmere v Northampton

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barnsley	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

#### Barrow League

(1) Barrow v Fleetwood  
(2) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(3) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(4) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(5) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(6) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(7) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(8) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(9) Fleetwood v Fleetwood  
(10) Fleetwood v Fleetwood

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

#### Valley Conference

(1) Bath v Kettering  
(2) Kettering v Bath  
(3) Kettering v Bath  
(4) Kettering v Bath  
(5) Kettering v Bath  
(6) Kettering v Bath  
(7) Kettering v Bath  
(8) Kettering v Bath  
(9) Kettering v Bath  
(10) Kettering v Bath

#### Valley Conference

(1) Bath v Kettering  
(2) Kettering v Bath  
(3) Kettering v Bath  
(4) Kettering v Bath  
(5) Kettering v Bath  
(6) Kettering v Bath  
(7) Kettering v Bath  
(8) Kettering v Bath  
(9) Kettering v Bath  
(10) Kettering v Bath

### First division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesbrough	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Wolves	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Bolton	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Reading	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Sheff Utd	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Sheff Wed	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Sheff Wed	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Sheff Wed	27	14	7	6	41	25	49
Sheff Wed	27	14	7	6	41	25	49

### Second division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Third division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Fourth division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Fifth division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Sixth division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Seventh division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Eighth division

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blackburn	26	18	5	3	57	21	59
Man Utd	26	18	5	3	46	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Liverpool	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46
Sheff Wed	26	13	7	6	44	26	46

### Bel's Scottish League

(1) Falkirk v Hearts  
(2) Hibernian v Partick  
(3) Kilmarnock v Aberdeen  
(4) Motherwell v Celtic  
(5) Rangers v Dundee Utd

### First division

(55)	Berwick v Dumbarton	..	..	..
(56)	East Fife v Clyde	..	..	..
(57)	Greenock Morton v Brechin	..	..	..
(58)	Meadowbank v Queen of South	..	..	..
(-)	Stenhousemuir v Stirling	..	..	..
Third division				
(-)	Alicia v Arbroath	..	..	..
(-)	Cole Thistle v Forfar	..	..	..
(-)	Montrose v Ross County	..	..	..
(-)	Queen's Park v Cowdenbeath	..	..	..



# Mastermind who is one jump ahead

What is the secret of Yogi Breisner's teaching? Jamie Osborne has been working with him

When Kim Bailey, the former Lambourn trainer, was asked about the apparent transformation in the jumping ability of his Gold Cup favourite, Master Oats, he was quick to acknowledge the invaluable input of the Swedish event rider-turned-trainer, Yogi Breisner.

Anyone reading the racing press of late cannot fail to have noticed Breisner's name appearing with increasing regularity alongside some of our top horses, such as Large Action, Coulton, Black Hunter and, of course, Master Oats. He now works regularly with a growing group of leading trainers, including Bailey, Oliver Sherwood, Charlie Brooks and Henrietta Knight.

It was Knight, herself an experienced event rider, who first recognised Breisner's talents as an educator of both horse and rider and saw the benefit of applying them to her racehorses and, fortunately for her, to her jockeys. His role is now one of a consultant who is brought in to assist the trainers with the jumping education of their horses.

"It is not that trainers and jockeys do not know how horses should jump, or how to school them. Of course they do," Breisner said. "They have done it for centuries and done a very good job of it, but the fact is that four eyes will see more than two. I am an extra pair of eyes that can draw on my experience in the eventing world to see where I might be able to improve a horse's jumping technique and, therefore, increase its chance of winning races. The whole exercise is a team effort between the trainer, the jockey and myself."

Breisner's experience is considerable. He rode for the Swedish national event team for 12 years and has trained some of the world's top riders. For the majority of his riding career, he was based at the Waterstock Training Centre near Oxford, working with another Swede, Lars Sederholm.



Breisner demonstrates some of the finer points of riding technique to an entertained staff at Henrietta Knight's yard near Wantage this week.

"I feel I am fortunate to have been connected for 13 years with Lars, who is one of the most brilliant trainers of horses and riders in the world," he said. "Now Breisner is using his experience to benefit racehorses and jockeys. His approach is nothing new, but his feel for exactly what a horse requires for improvement is his real strength."

Some of the education will be done on the schooling ground, but Breisner likes to combine this with the use of show jumps. "I am not trying to make showjumpers out of the racehorses," he said. "We use the show jumps because you can move them around to suit the different requirements a horse has, in order to get him to understand what you want him to do," Breisner

knows that a horse's understanding is the integral part of what we are all trying to achieve. "Sometimes a horse gets it wrong and doesn't know why. What we do is to allow the horse a chance to understand why he is getting it wrong so then, in his own mind, he can work out how to get it right."

He is a firm believer that schooling is an on-going exercise. "Training horses in jumping and keeping their jumping up to scratch is exactly the same as fitness work. Just because a horse is fit enough to win a race one day does not mean you can turn him out in a field for a month and he would win again."

"It is exactly the same with the jumping. Just because a horse has a jumping prob-

lem has put in a perfect round, it does not mean the problem is solved - It just means one has to continue the work along the same lines in order to keep it up to scratch."

Breisner, 40, has a quiet, almost shy demeanour, but when he speaks, you have to listen, whether it be about horses or any other subject. His approach to teaching is calm and logical; he delivers instruction and advice with an air of confidence that transmits itself to those with whom he is working.

While the eventing world still takes up 70 per cent of his time, his enthusiasm for racing is obvious. He has never sought any publicity or recognition for what he does; for him, the satisfaction lies in the job itself.

"My interest is not to see my

name in print. Where I get my enjoyment is when one gets a team of people together, they all scratch their heads in an attempt to solve a problem, and if the outcome works, that gives me a tremendous amount of satisfaction," he said.

I have, in the past few seasons, been fortunate enough to work closely with Breisner, as have several other jockeys, including Graham Bradley, Norman Williamson and Richard Dunwoody. He has had a significant influence on my riding, instilling the importance of mutual confidence between horse and rider.

Bradley, who won the Gold Cup on Bregawn in 1993, knows Breisner's talents as well as anybody. When Bradley went to Ireland last

week to school tomorrow's Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup horse, Merry Gale, he took Breisner with him for advice. "The man is a genius," Bradley said. "His psychology with both horse and rider is incredible. He inspires you with confidence."

Breisner has been referred to as a guru and a wizard. These words suggest there is some sort of mystique to his methods. He has also met with some scepticism from certain racing quarters, scepticism based on ignorance.

Those of us who have worked with him know the value of his methods. He applies a refreshing, commonsense approach to a subject in which he is an expert. There is no mystique to Yogi Breisner.

Boutin obituary, page 19

## WETHERBY

THUNDERER  
1.10 Blackpatch Hill. 1.40 High Altitude. 2.10 Rustic Sunburst. 2.40 Squire Silk. 3.15 Teaplanter. 3.45 Ridgway.  
Brian Beal. 3.15 Teaplanter.

GOING: SOFT SIS

### 1.10 ACORN NOVICES HURDLE

(£3,130; 2m 110yds) (11 runners)

1 MONROVIA 10 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 2 J. Beal 70. 3 ANOTHER FOURTH 40 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 4 J. Beal 70. 5 BLACKPATCH HILL 94 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 6 J. Beal 70. 7 GEMSTONE 38 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 8 J. Beal 70. 9 GREY ANCONA 97 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 10 J. Beal 70. 11 PROVENCE 18 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 12 J. Beal 70. 13 DARK DAWN 270 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 14 J. Beal 70. 15 SQUIRE SILK 94 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 16 J. Beal 70. 17 TROOPERS 100 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 18 J. Beal 70. 19 COUNTRY BELLEVILLE 28 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 20 J. Beal 70. 21 DANCING BEES 12 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 22 J. Beal 70. 23 AMBER VALLEY 56 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 24 J. Beal 70. 25 COUNTRY BELLEVILLE 28 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 26 J. Beal 70. 27 GREY ANCONA 97 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 28 J. Beal 70. 29 BLACKPATCH HILL 94 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 30 J. Beal 70. 31 ANOTHER FOURTH 40 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 32 J. Beal 70. 33 MONROVIA 10 (P) (5) M. S. Beal 11-12. 34 J. 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Saturday portrait: Dean Richards, by John Hopkins

## Taciturn yeoman who sustains England's steady forward march

A concrete corridor runs beneath the main stand of Leicester's ground and off it is a series of rooms. One room is where journalists gather before home matches and return after the game is over to write and enjoy a cup of tea and the best sandwiches in first-class rugby.

The walls of this room are decorated with photographs of Leicester players down the years — the hooker, Peter Wheeler, and the centre, Paul Dodge, both of whom also played for the British Isles, among them. One of the most striking photographs is of Dean Richards in a match against France at Twickenham in 1989.

The photograph is stunning in the message it gives. The massive frame of the England No 8 dominates the photograph as he leaps over a Frenchman. Catching Richards when he is in the air heightens the impression that he is a massive figure, which at nearly 18 stone he patently is. French hands are clutching at his thighs in an attempt to halt his progress.

Richards's hair is parade-ground short, his mouth set determinedly, his stockings around his ankles. He is cradling the ball in his left arm and has raised his knees high to clear the prostrate opponent. The symbolism is unavoidable. As Richards rose, so did his team. England won 11-0, the first of seven successive victories, including the 1991 World Cup semi-final.

That's absolutely typical Deano," Chris Smith, the *Sunday Times* photographer who took the picture, said. "I remember he seemed to emerge from a group of players like a great white rising from the sea. The French scrum-half is on his knees looking up at Richards in awe. Serge Blanco appears on the right of the photograph and looks perplexed."

The gun-barrel grey texture of the photograph creates the feeling that Richards is a man of steel and unswerving purpose. It is what so many photographs are not, worth a thousand words and, deservedly, it was named the rugby photograph of the year. Six years on and Richards, who will be 32 in July,

has hardly changed. His fair hair is receding into a prominent widow's peak. Years of mayhem on rugby fields around the world have marked his otherwise youthful face.

His stockings remain lowered, the ankles revealing flagpole-thin legs that hardly look strong enough to support his massive chest and shoulders. Richards, who at 6ft 3½ in is only just big enough for the No 8 position, gives the impression of having been hewn from a slab of Leicestershire granite. There is an aura around this yeoman of England. It is no surprise that he was born in the centre of the country, in Nuneaton, nor that he does a yeoman's job, that of a policeman. PC 941 spends his days patrolling the motorways around traffic headquarters in

**'His ambling, rather uncoordinated gait resembles an arthritic old man trying to catch a bus'**

Enderby and there can be few more intimidating sights to someone who has just been pulled over than to have Richards rolling towards them intent on maintaining law and order.

Richards's heart is where his home is and you get the feeling that, while work could take him elsewhere, he is happiest in this heart of old England, where he was born, went to school — John Cleveland College, Hinkley — and now lives with his wife, Nicola, and Jessica, their 22-month-old daughter.

It is here that Richards is able to indulge in one of his main pursuits away from rugby — rough shooting. Pheasants, pigeons and rabbits are all liable to fall prey to his smoking 12 bore. It is not easy to prise from him the appeal of this sport, other than that he likes it and that it provides food for the family freezer.

Quiet to the point of taciturnity, there is not much humour to leaven the gravitas. One of his few jokes on record concerns England's game against France in Paris in 1986. "All that spitting, swearing and shoving," Richards said, "and that's just the spectators."

Now that Will Carling has silenced the critics of his captaincy and play and Stuart Barnes has forsaken the lowlands of the pitch for the uplands of journalism, some of England's positional worries have been solved.

In Richards's case, the argument is not whether he should be playing today, when he wins his fortieth cap, acting as the anchor-man in England's massive, intimidating and potentially magnificent back row in their battle within a battle against France's massive, intimidating and magnificent back row. After Richards's immense performance against Ireland two weeks ago, the prospect of England going into a game without him is like watching someone attempt to drive a car without a steering wheel.

The concern centring on Richards is whether he is best suited for the World Cup on the firm grounds of South Africa in May and June. Richards's ambling, rather uncoordinated gait resembles an arthritic old man trying to catch a bus. It is not ideally suited to a game where speed over the ground is important.

To his credit, however, he appears fitter than ever this season, his desire whetted by the forthcoming South African campaign. Above all, he possesses what one leading rugby journalist describes as the greatest positional sense he has ever seen in a forward.

Richards is one of those men whose undermannered style of play enables others to catch the eye. Like a gentleman's gentleman, he does his job discreetly. While he attends to business at the coalface, using his massive upper-body strength to secure a ball or an opponent, his back-row colleagues, can, if they are so inclined, be prancing around like pit ponies on holiday.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE MARTIN

It was Richards's workmanlike, selfless and unspectacular style of play for the British Isles in Australia in 1989 that contributed to Mike Teague being named player of the series. Likewise, would Tim Rodber have been able to make those crunching tackles against Ireland two weeks ago if Richards had not freed him from some of the basic chores?

What Richards does to a degree of excellence not often seen is grab

the ball, make it secure for as long as he deems it necessary before he gives it a bit of a nudge so that someone else can move it forward, often in spectacular fashion. A Richards manoeuvre such as this can turn a match, as it did for England against Ireland in 1991.

Such selflessness and modesty make him a talisman among his Leicester team-mates, who have lost only one game while he has captained them this season, and in

the white shirt of England, Richards comes into his own where and when the going is hardest, which partly explains why his colleagues consider him to be so valuable. In turn, this explains why no resentment is harboured against him for conceding the penalty that lost the British Isles the first Test against New Zealand in 1993.

At Twickenham this afternoon there could be glimpses of the

dangers England face in South Africa if France move the ball regularly and quickly to the open spaces. Benetton, Benazzi and Cabannes, particularly Cabannes, have an edge in speed over Richards and his two colleagues. However, if England get the share of ball they want, and usually get when Richards plays, then it will not matter. It will be their ball. They can do with it what they want.

## Scots intend to sparkle away from the spotlight

By GERALD DAVIES

SOONER or later a moment arrives in a journalist's life when, try as he might to do otherwise, he loses a friend or two because of something he writes. Because of what follows, this may appear to be such a moment. There is a danger that the match this afternoon, between Scotland and Ireland at Murrayfield, could be the beginning of the end of the five nations' championship script: a kind of afterthought. Others have done it. As a Celtic cousin, I have no wish to comply; well, not totally, at any rate.

Judged by the column inches devoted to that "other" game and by the extensive coverage given in the media elsewhere, this match has almost been passed by as an irrelevance. What conspires in Edinburgh is of no more significance, it seems, than to determine who will take away the wooden spoon, while in London, in only the second weekend of the tournament, nothing less than the season's champion is already about to be decided.

Asked to comment on the view south of the border that this game will only decide who will end up bottom of the table, Gavin Hastings, the Scotland captain, replied that he found it an "interesting perception". You could feel the gall rising at the presumption. To be fair, it is not only those south of the border or across the Channel who see it this way. Most of those in Scotland

### MURRAYFIELD TEAMS

#### SCOTLAND

A G Hastings\* (Wetlands)  
C A Joiner (Melrose)  
G P J Townsend (Glasgow)  
I C Jardine (Stirling County)  
K M Logan (Stirling County)  
G M Chalmers (Melrose)  
B W Redpath (Melrose)  
D I W Hilton (Bath)  
K S Milne (Harrowby)  
P H Wright (Boroughmuir)  
D F Watt (Edinburgh A)  
D F Conn (Glasgow)  
S J Campbell (Dundee HSPF)  
I R Morrison (London Scottish)  
E W Peters (Bath)

Referee: WD Bevan (Wales)

Replacements: 16 I C Glasgow (Harrowby), 17 A G Shiel (Melrose), 18 D W Patterson (West Hartlepool), 19 G W Weir (Melrose), 20 A P Sutherland (London Scottish), 21 K D McKersie (Stirling County).

#### IRELAND

C M P O'Shea (Lansdowne)  
S P Geoghegan (Bath)  
B J Mullin (Blackrock College)  
P P A Danelah (Garryowen)  
J G Bell (Ballymore)  
P A Burke (Cork Constitution)  
M T Bradley (Cork Constitution)  
N J Poppo (Wexford)  
K M Wood (Garryowen)  
P M Ciochey (Young Munster)  
A G Foley (Shannon)  
P B Johns (Garryowen)  
G M Fulcher (Cork Constitution)  
W D McBride (Malague)  
B M Cronin (Garryowen)

Replacements: 16 N K P J Woods (Blackrock College), 17 E P Elwood (Lansdowne), 18 A C Rolland (Blackrock College), 19 M J Galwey (Shannon), 20 G S O'Sullivan (London Irish), 21 T J Kingston (Dolphin).

and Ireland perceive it as such, too. Those who observe matters from the sidelines have had little to convince them of an opposite view. Ireland's victory against the United States before Christmas lacked conviction and they failed to stop England's bandwagon in its tracks last month.

Scotland, for their part, albeit with a team reduced in strength, visited Argentina in the summer and lost all but one of their fixtures. Having lost heavily to South Africa in November, Scotland managed to arrest their series of nine consecutive losses in international rugby by beating Canada a fortnight ago. This was hardly the stuff to rekindle optimism among their supporters. The players, by necessity, must look on things differently.

"We did gain confidence from that victory," Hastings said. "We're entering this game with an unchanged team and so are looking for an improved performance." He wins his 53rd cap, which establishes a record number of appearances for his country. Scotland's efforts will depend much on him and how he responds not only to the criticism that has recently been made of his play but also to the disc problem from which he has suffered for some time but more acutely of late. His influence is obvious, since he scored 17 of the 22 points his team registered

against Canada, all from kicks at goal.

After their defeat against England, the Ireland selectors cut a swath through their team and originally made six changes for this game. But with Jim Staples withdrawing this week after being chosen, Conor O'Shea, who appeared against England, plays at full back. Bradley is restored to Hogan at scrum half and Bell for Woods on the wing. There are changes in the pack also. McBride is a flanker instead of a centre, and Fulcher, who came in for Francis in that last match, keeps his place. Galwey is relegated to the replacements' bench and Johns moves from No 8 to scrum half. Ben Cronin is the new cap on the side of the scrum. Make what you will of all that.

If this fixture lacks the high profile of other contests, it may be because the teams rarely find themselves as front-runners for the championship or triple crown. But if other countries often fall under the weight of expectation, when deeds fail to match the hopes and a grim confrontation ensues, Scotland and Ireland, existing in others' shadows, invariably produce a contest of verve and colour. For that alone, the game should not be committed to a mere footnote. Scotland, who have not lost to Ireland since 1988, can be expected to extend this unbeaten run.



Hastings will be hoping the rebuilt Scotland team can match the magnificence of Murrayfield

## Hastings looks to future rather than past glories

Mark Souster talks to the respected captain who will become Scotland's most-capped player against Ireland at Murrayfield today

Talk to anyone who knows Gavin Hastings and the response is invariably the same. Good man, great ambassador for Scotland and rugby. A man with no edges. Meet him and the impression is the same.

It is evident that Hastings's dignity, thoughtfulness and ability to put people at ease, together with an unflinching sense of purpose and unshakable commitment to the team, be it Cambridge University, Watsonians, Scotland or the British Isles, have marked him out as someone special.

There is genuine affection, not just within his native country, for Hastings, who today wins his 53rd cap against Ireland at Murrayfield, eclipsing the Scotland record held jointly by Jim Renwick and Colin Deans. Not that records mean that much to him at the moment, if they ever did. He would no doubt trade a few caps for the guarantee of a couple of wins in the five nations' championship this season. If only to silence the critics who have written off the team, and to stop the sniggering rumoured to be emanating from certain quarters in England.

It is only in retirement, probably this summer, that Hastings will reflect on his considerable achievements, which include a Scotland record of 489 points, captaining the national side on 112 occasions, and being a widely respected leader of the 1993 British Isles side in New Zealand. But the statistics

alone do not explain the impact he has had on Scottish rugby over the past nine years. He has been the inspiration and the common thread which has helped knit Scotland together through the good and, more recently, the less successful times.

The traumas of the past 18 months, during which Scottish rugby has been held up to public ridicule, with Hastings's role also being called into question, have hurt a man who in the pain of defeat against England a year ago shed tears for his country.

The demise in Scotland's fortunes, he believes, can be pinpointed to November 20, 1993, the day a black cloud, an All Black cloud, enveloped Murrayfield. The 51-15 defeat was a hammer blow from which Scotland are only just beginning to recover. Since then there's also been the abject and frustrating capitulation against South Africa.

"Not my best game," he admits, adding: "I'm prepared to accept mistakes if people learn from them. Not if they're not. I'm not happy if people get complacent. There is too much complacency at international level. The rewards are so great that you have to be ruthless."

Hastings can draw compar-

isons between the present situation and 1986, when he burst onto the international scene with 18 points against France. Then, much the same as now, Scotland were rebuilding. Hastings and his brother, Scott, were the youngsters, and now, with Scott's absence from the national team after 51 appearances, Gavin is the father figure to some promising but raw talent.

"When Scott and I came into the team, John Rutherford [the former Scotland stand-off half] described us as a breath of fresh air. But that was after a season or so when we had both proved we could achieve at the top level. Now, with the team reshaping, I do get excited about some of the new boys. We need to start winning games. I hope I can then make similar comments about the youngsters in the team."

With Scotland struggling of late, Hastings, 33, has been a target for criticism, but he is likely to retire in his own time, not at the behest of others. When the moment finally comes, how would he like to be remembered? "As a passionate Scot who had the respect of his colleagues. But I'm not looking for tributes. They'll have to wait just a little longer."

## Unsung Cronin happy to have arrived

By DAVID HANDS

IT WOULD be just Ben Cronin's luck if, when he finally makes his debut for Ireland against Scotland today, his thunder were to be stolen by another player of the same name making his five nations' comeback: Damian Cronin returns to the Scotland second row.

Not that the Irish Cronin will mind unduly, so long as he makes it onto the Murrayfield pitch. A late-developing back-row forward, his debut is even later than it might have been: he was forced to withdraw, injured, from the game against the United States last November.

A native of Limerick in Ireland's deep south, Cronin escaped the junior representative net. His education came at the

Cistercian College in Roscrea and Waterpark College, but there were no schools caps nor even under-21 appearances for him. He vaulted onto the national stage at Musgrave Park, in Cork, on October 21, 1992.

Munster were playing Australia in an increasingly fractious match. Towards the end, Mick Galwey and Garrick Morgan were sent off and, with only two minutes to go, Charlie Haly levelled the score with a penalty. In the final minute, Munster won a lineout. Jim Galvin, the replacement stand-off half, swung his boot and the dropped goal sealed a famous victory.

During the post-mortems, little was said about the fair-haired No 8, in only his second game for the province, who helped

to construct a penalty try from a collapsed scrum under the Australian crossbar and whose prowess allowed Munster to dominate the lineout. That was Cronin, proving how successful his move from Waterpark to Garryowen had been. He was promptly selected for an A international and should have played in the final trial, but for a severe leg injury.

Last season he virtually disappeared from view until, as Ireland made their injury-strewn way through Australia, he was summoned as a late replacement for Roger Wilson. This season, he has never been out of the frame. Standing 6ft 5in and just over 16st, his bustling form in the A international against England last month earned him the cap that has for so long seemed tantalisingly out of reach.

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Recent form irrelevant when five nations' championship resumes today

## Grand opportunity awaits victors

By DAVID HANDS  
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WHEN France last won at Twickenham, rugby union's inaugural World Cup had yet to be played, the Geoff Cooke management era had yet to be introduced in England and not one of the France XV that will play today had pulled on a five nations' championship jersey save for Philippe Sella.

The year was 1987. Sella scored a try in a 19-15 victory and France went on to win the championship. Since then, they have won two more outright titles and shared a third, while England, their opponents today in the Save and Prosper international at Twickenham, have won the championship only twice, which serves to show that dominance against a particular opponent is no guarantee of championship success.

Yet, should France break their bogey today, they will surely hope to head for the World Cup in South Africa this summer as champions of Europe. Already, they have disposed of Wales, the 1994 champions; the Scots have never won at the Parc des Princes, and the French have not lost to Ireland, who play in Scotland today, since 1983.

The 11-0 victory in 1989  
Record prices ..... 1  
Forward progress ..... 38  
Hastings record ..... 38

hinted at England's potential; it was realised in 1991 in a glorious grand-slam epic to which France contributed hugely though lost 21-19. In 1993, in a somewhat flat encounter, there was no more than one point in it, and England's comfort is that they have won far more emphatically in the past four matches played in Paris.

None of which means a great deal to the England of today; a developing team, half of whom go back only to 1993 as far as their experience of the French is concerned. However, in the psychological make-up of the game, England have the comfort of seven straight wins behind them; France have the itch that will not go away.

"I don't say we've got an inferiority complex, but we do tend to let them dictate the way the game is played," Philippe Saint-André, the France captain, said. "We have got to stamp our authority on the match for a change." If they do so, it will surely be through the back row's ability to get wide swifter than England's, but that hinges upon a degree of set-piece dominance. The much-reviled Olivier Merle may not have been



Brian Moore, the England hooker who today faces France for a ninth time, practises his throwing-in skills during a training session yesterday. Photograph: Marc Aspland

the most salmon-like of leapers in the lineup, but he anchored the scrum and moved around the field better than many may give him credit for.

Merle, however, has been dropped after his head-butt on Ricky Evans during the game with Wales last month, and Olivier Brouzet, who is tall, athletic but inexperienced, replaces him. Absent too is the injured Emile Ntamack, but Philippe Bernat-Salles, his replacement, does not leave the team noticeably weaker.

If England can exert themselves at the set pieces, there will be less freedom for the France back row to roam. Such a dangerous runner as Laurent Cabannes will be tied in or, at best, forced to combat the wave of England No 8s that will come battering at him, ball in hand.



## FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

In horrid conditions in Dublin two weeks ago, the England back row was magnificent. So we have to find ways of scoring tries.

Three tries against Ireland was one more than England scored in the entire championship last year - and the players acknowledge that it should have been double that - so nobody should doubt either the capacity or, more significantly, the attitude. In

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
France	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Ireland	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Wales	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Scotland	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

RESULTS: Ireland 9 England 20, France 21 Wales 9.

FIXTURES: Today: England v France, Scotland v Ireland, Feb 18: Wales v England, France v Scotland, Mar 4: Scotland v Wales, Ireland v France, Mar 18: England v Scotland, Wales v Ireland.

Dublin, Will Carling, the England captain, excelled himself. He was more relaxed than of late and believes that the return of Jeremy Guscott, the excellence of Rob Andrew's refurbished game, the attacking potential of Mike Catt and the growing power of his forwards have drawn the focus away from him, leaving that rare blessing of space in which to think and play.

"I think we have more options going into this game than in many of the others," Carling said. "The 1991-92 side [which also won a grand slam] was rigid in what it could achieve."

"It was a good set-piece side and there was no point playing away from its strengths. This time, we have other strengths we want to work on." The promise is there; it should be fulfilled.

ENGLAND	FRANCE
M J Catt (Bath)	15 J-L Badoury (Colomiers)
T Underwood (Leicester)	14 P Bernat-Salles (Pau)
W D C Carling (Harlequins)*	13 P Sella (Agen)
J C Guscott (Bath)	12 T Lacroix (Dax)
R Underwood (Leicester/RAF)	11 P Saint-André (Montauban)*
C R Andrew (Wasps)	10 G Daynaud (Toulouse)
K P P Bracken (Bristol)	9 G Accoceberry (Bègles-Bordeaux)
J Leonard (Harlequins)	8 L Benzezech (Racing)
B C Moore (Harlequins)	7 J-M Gonzalez (Bayonne)
V E Ubbogu (Bath)	6 C Calizzano (Toulouse)
T A K Rodder (Northampton/Army)	5 A Benazzi (Agen)
M O Johnson (Leicester)	4 O Brouzet (Grenoble)
M C Bayfield (Northampton)	3 C Roumat (Dax)
B B Clarke (Bath)	2 L Cabannes (Racing)
D Richards (Leicester)	1 P Benetton (Agen)

Referee: K W McCartney (Scotland)

\*captain  
Replacements: 16 J E B Callard (Bath), 17 P R de Gennville (Bath), 18 C D Morris (Orrell), 19 S O Ojomoh (Bath), 20 R G R Davis (Bath), 21 G C Howntree (Leicester).

\*captain  
Replacements: 16 S Viare (Brive), 17 Y Delisle (Toulon), 18 A Mécabian (Perpignan), 19 M Cécillon (Bourgnon), 20 M de Rougemont (Toulon), 21 L Seigne (Brive).

Rob Hughes, page 39  
Desperate times, page 39

## England miss chance to follow square route

FROM ALAN LEE  
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT  
IN PERTH

IF Michael Atherton has had bad dreams on tour, they almost certainly resembled the events of yesterday here. This was the scenario he had dreaded, England, primed to pursue the improbable prize of a squared series, might have taken control of this final Test, reimposing the mood of their victory in Adelaide, but for dropping four catches.

The charity began with the fourth ball of the game and, sadly, gave Graham Gooch's farewell Test a gruesome start. Let nobody say it was a simple chance to Gooch at third slip but, at full stretch to his right, he got two hands to the ball and split it. Michael Slater had not scored at the time. He went on to make 124.

He should still not have scored so many, because Devon Malcolm, the aggrieved bowler in the opening over, dropped him twice more, on 59 off his own bowling and on 87 at long leg off Phillip DeFreitas. Neither catch was difficult for an international cricketer, even one as short-sighted as Malcolm, and the expression of despair that appeared on Atherton's face after the third reprieve was graphic.

By then, Slater and Mark Waugh were beyond the century mark in a third-wicket stand that was ultimately to produce 183 runs. Yet it had yielded only 25 when Waugh, misjudging the extra bounce of the pitch, as successive batsmen were to do all day, cut Chris Lewis straight to gully,

where John Crawley put him down.

Australia, who entered this game in chastened condition and, after winning the toss, had lost their first two wickets for 35, could so easily have spent last night pondering the embarrassing possibility of a second defeat by opponents their nation had scorned. Instead, they slept contentedly on 283 for four, while Atherton added a few exasperated mental notes to his tour diary.

There has been potential for a day such as this all series. England's fielding has regularly creaked and crumbled under pressure and the loss of Graeme Hick increased the prospect of calamity. With Hick in the side, indeed, Gooch's suspect reactions would not have been needed in the slip cordon.

Atherton revealed earlier this week that his official end-

## PERTH SCOREBOARD

Australia won toss	50 (Slater 38, 3-238 (M E Waugh 88), 4-247 (S R Waugh 5))
AUSTRALIA: First Innings	
M J Slater c Lewis to DeFreitas (297min, 251 balls, 13 fours)	124
*M A Taylor c Rhodes to Lewis (18min, 36 balls)	9
D C Boon c Ramprakash to Lewis (10min, 8 balls)	1
M E Waugh c DeFreitas to Lewis (24min, 177 balls, 10 fours)	88
S R Waugh not out (4min, 39 balls, 2 fours)	23
G S Blewett not out (58min, 57 balls, 3 fours)	17
Extras (b 6, lb 4, w 4, nb 7)	21
Total (4 wks, 90 overs, 372min)	283
W A Healy, S K Warne, J Arnot, C J McDermott and G D McGrath to bow.	
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-47 (Slater 38); 2-	

of-tour report will include strong words about the fielding standards that could be expected from the selected party. "Taking a week fielding side to Australia makes life very difficult. It has been the most glaring difference between the teams and it drags

the whole side down, affecting spirit and confidence. We made the same mistake four years ago, under a different captain, and a different set of selectors, and in my report I shall say it must never happen again."

Though Malcolm was to

become the villain, ending the day with figures of nought for 76 to accompany his two fumbles, his first menacing spell deserved better. He delivered his six new-ball overs at great pace, without making the common mistake on this ground of pitching too short.

There was something in the surface for the bowlers throughout the day but the consistent pace and bounce made it a pitch on which batsmen could hit through the line with confidence once their eye was in. Neither Mark Taylor nor David Boon reached that happy stage. Both fell to the rejuvenated Lewis, who took four wickets on Monday afternoon to bring victory close in Adelaide and now added two more in his first two overs of the game.

Boon, well caught at cover from a difficult, checked drive, now has five consecu-

tive failures to his name and can no longer be certain of touring the West Indies next month. Not so Slater, who became the first man on either side to total 500 runs in the series when he made 46.

Risk is part of Slater's game and it makes him all the more watchable. Between lives, he played strokes that were exquisite and others that were outrageous. How many openers, for instance, dare to drive Malcolm back over his head? Yet Slater, with his whirling arms and balletic footwork, does it as mere routine. With the finesse of Mark Waugh at the other end, this was a partnership to savour.

With the score 151 for two, Atherton felt obliged to seek variety and tossed the ball to Mark Ramprakash. This was his first Test since last April in Antigua, which was also the last time he bowled a spell of such length. In Antigua, he had three overs; last summer, in the county championship, he bowled a total of two. It was hardly an attractive attacking option for England.

Slater completed his century with, by his standards, muted celebrations. But he need not have felt embarrassed about England's shortcomings. This was his third hundred of a series to which he has given many memories. He batted a further hour before Lewis, at point, grabbed a slashed cut at the second attempt. Although Waugh quickly followed to an idle leg-side flick, England could not make up the surrendered ground.

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Gooch goes to ground after dropping Slater in the first over in Perth yesterday. Photograph: Graham Morris

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PLUS: Valentine's Day gifts, page 13



Ruth Gledhill preaches at St Mary, Oxford

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PLUS: Outings for all the family, page 2



Exquisite blooms to cheer the winter gloom

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PLUS: The planting revolution, page 3



How to make a holiday out of a hobby

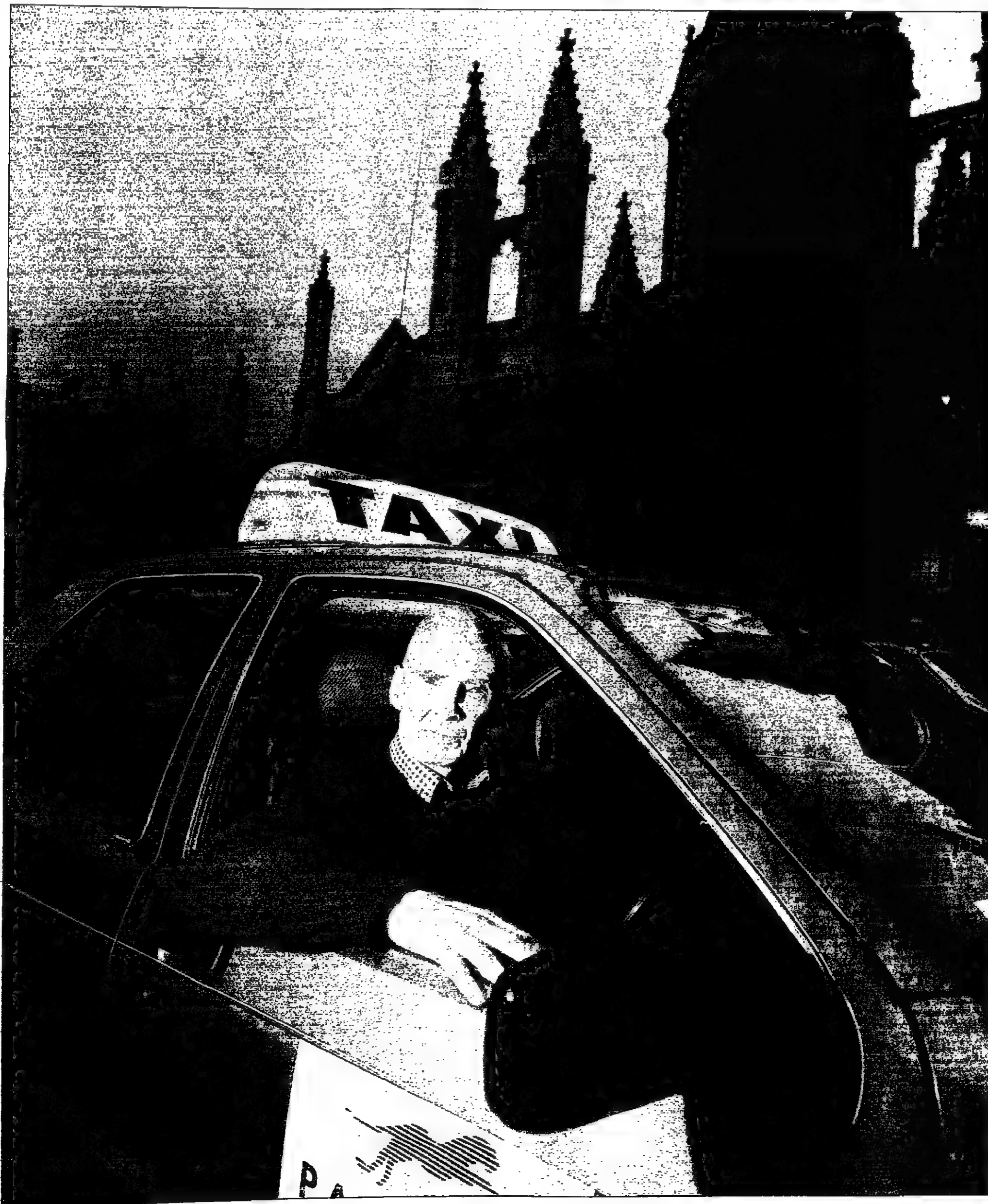
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PLUS: A cultural cruise on the Danube, page 24

# WEEKEND

## A VERY ORDINARY MUGGING

by Finbar MacMahon



Cambridge city centre, Saturday morning, 2.45am: I am lying on my back in the middle of the road. Above me five drunken yobs, intent on stealing my taxi, search desperately for the keys. Three cars speed by in quick succession; the wheels of the last one so close to my face I can smell the burning rubber as the driver swerves, then brakes hard to avoid hitting me.

I am paralysed with fear. I think: this is it, any moment now I'll be just another crime statistic, either run over by the next car or kicked to death by these hooligans. "I can't find the keys," screams one young man, from inside the taxi. What he doesn't know is that I'd managed to snatch the keys from the ignition and slide them under the mat when he and his thug-friends dragged me from behind the steering wheel.

From where I lie, I can see the late-night drinkers as they queue for taxis at the rank across the street. Young men less than half my age, they are mostly stupefied, unable to function properly. Two are so obviously drunk they relieve themselves, quite openly, against the back wall of Emmanuel College. Others are shouting, swearing, making lewd gestures at a solitary, weeping girl. None is more than 30 paces from where I lie, terrified, unable to defend myself. Not one of them moves to help me.

When I was a young man this kind of behaviour was inconceivable. In the 1950s and 1960s we enjoyed ourselves to the point of exhaustion, and sometimes beyond. We all got a little drunk, a little out of hand; the occasional one-on-one punch-up perhaps, nothing more sinister.

But there was none of this seemingly endless seeking-out of mayhem: gangs of youths, tooled-up, bloodied, marauding through the streets, intent on violence for its own sake. Glassings, kickings and beatings were not a way of life. Middle-aged men and women were deferred to, treated with respect; but now, here in Cambridge, the middle-aged and the elderly hurry by, heads down for fear of eye contact, watching their backs, desperate for the safety of their own homes.

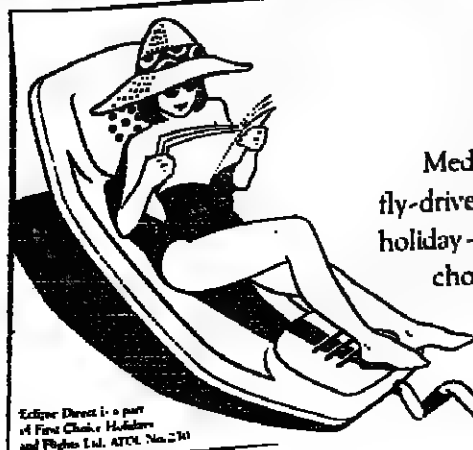
Cambridge, of course, has always had its "little local difficulties". But the centuries-old friction between "town" and "gown" has, in the 1990s, given way to something far more sinister — much more menacing — than straightforward youthful exuberance. We are now — here in Cambridge, as elsewhere — living in the age of the violent thug.

And the rise in violent crime in Cambridge has reached staggering proportions. The belief that this is a quiet, idyllic, academic backwater untouched by the phenomenon of late 20th-century violence is a nonsense. Last year's 30.5 per cent city rise in crimes of violence against the person, compared to 9 per cent in the county and 6 per cent nationally, tells its own story. Even gritty Huddersfield, a town not normally perceived as being "idyllic", shows only a 3.7 per cent rise in violent crime.

Five minutes before I was attacked, I had approached the taxi rank in my empty cab. I'd taken all the precautions we part-time cabbies have been told are a necessary part of survival on a Friday night in Cambridge: read the body language; couples where possible; nobody with food; and nobody, absolutely nobody — under any circumstances — carrying bottles.

But before the wheels had stopped turning, two yobs had jumped the queue and were sitting in my cab. Sitting beside me was the bigger of the two; deeply tanned, wearing a black T-shirt with the word "Lanzarote" printed in white on the front, he was undoubtedly the one in charge. "Chesterton please... if you don't mind, mate," he said in

Continued on page 3, col 1



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## DANCE

John Percival

**BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET:** Two attractive programmes are brought to the company's former London home this week. Cranko's comic *Pineapple Poll* is given on Tuesday and Wednesday as a 70th birthday tribute to Sir Charles Mackerras, who made the sprightly arrangement of melodies from Gilbert and Sullivan operas. With this are Balanchine's dramatic *Prodigal Son*, to Prokofiev's music, and the first London showing of young Matthew Hart's *Street*, to William Russo's "blues concerto" for harmonica, played by Paul Jones (vocalist with Manfred Mann in their 1960s glory days). Then the funniest, most brilliant and touching of all modern ballets, Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée* (Thursday 9 to Saturday 11).

**Sadler's Wells Theatre,** Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1 (0171-713 6000), Tues 7 to Sat 11 at 7.30pm; matinees: Wed 8 and Sat 11 at 2.30pm. (5)

**HELL BENT:** Nigel Charnock's latest solo show comes to London for a season at the Drill Hall after an ambitious tour. Continuing his exploration of sexual attitudes, he combines his skills as an actor and a dancer to show a camp drag artist at odds with his situation. Not for people who are easily shocked, but a gripping performance.

**Drill Hall,** Chancery Street, London, WC1 (0171-637 8270), Tues 7 until Sun 26, 8pm except Mondays.

## THEATRE

Benedict Nightingale

**THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR:** Terry Hands may not quite succeed in proving Ford's near-cuckolding by Falstaff an *Othello* story that ends happily, but, with a lordly Denis Quilley as the fat knight and a scowling Richard McCabe as the thin husband, his revival is big, generous and packed with humorous detail. **Old Vic,** National Theatre, South Bank, London SE1 (0171-928 2252), Mon 6 to Thur 9, 7.15pm; matinees: Thur 9, 2.15pm. Continues in repertoire. (5)

**EASTER:** Director Katie Mitchell's talent for cramming a stark stage with human feeling has seldom been better illustrated than by this unsentimental, touching revival of Strindberg's most forgiving portrait of the family. **Pil,** Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC1 (0171-638 8891), Mon 6 to Thur 9, 7.15pm; matinees: Thur 9, 2pm. (5)

• More theatre, page 6

## JAZZ

Clive Davis

**CLEO LAINE/ANNE HAMPTON CALLAWAY:** Quite a coup for the Green Room: Cleo Laine's residency (in which she will be accompanied as usual by John Dankworth) gives her an opportunity to unveil material from her most recent album, *Blue and Sentimental*. Now that she is — unbelievably — pushing 70, Laine does not spend quite as much time in the vocal stratosphere, which means that she gives even more attention than usual to teasing out the full meaning of every lyric. With luck, she will treat audiences to her luminous version of "Creole Love Call". In a strong week for cabaret, Anne Hampton Callaway opens a three-week season at Hyde Park Corner. Callaway (no relation to the late Cab Calloway, incidentally) is a classy vocalist with a strong line in wisecracks. **Laine Café Royal,** Regent St, London W1 (0171-437 0090), Tues 7 to Sat 18, 9.15pm; **Callaway Plaza** on the *Circle*, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-235 5273), Mon 6 to Sat 25 (except Sundays), 9.15pm and 11.15pm.



Veteran songstress Cleo Laine

**TUCK & PATTI/WARREN VACHE:** Trying to slot the duets of Tuck Andress and Patti Cathcart into any single category always causes problems. Straddling the best traditions of jazz and soul, the couple from San Francisco are more likely to sing a Beatles or Stevie Wonder ballad than anything by Harold Arlen or Irving Berlin. This is music as simple and romantic as it comes. Cathcart's smoky gospel voice accompanied only by her partner's supple guitar. A new album, out in April, prom-



In an exploration of sexual attitudes, Nigel Charnock dances *Hell Bent* at the Drill Hall, London

ises cover versions of Joni Mitchell and Jimi Hendrix. Warren Vaché approaches melodic popular song from a different direction. Like his colleague Scott Hamilton, he has done much to revive interest in vintage and mainstream jazz. His current playing grows more burnished with age. He appears on some of these dates with the fine swing guitarist Cal Collins.

**Tuck & Patti:** Jazz Café, Parkway, London NW1 (0171-916 6000), Wed 8, 9.30pm; **Vaché:** Hospital Field House, Arbroath, Scotland (01241 872333), tonight, 8pm; **All Saints,** Woodham Lane, Woking, tomorrow (014837 62418), 8pm; **Pizza Express,** Dean St, London W1 (0171-439 8722), Mon 6, Wed 8.

**Richard Morrison**

**BENJAMIN RETURNS:** When he was fresh out of Cambridge in the early 1980s, George Benjamin was celebrated in some quarters as the most talented young British composer to emerge since Britten in the 1930s. Not surprisingly, he found this overblown fanfare difficult to follow, and in recent years his output has not been prodigious. But his music is exquisitely crafted, and I hope the Hallé audience turns out in force to hear him conduct his orchestral work, *Sudden Time*, in a programme that includes Ravel, Stravinsky and Messiaen (with Messiaen's widow, Yvonne Loriod, the piano soloist in *Requiem des Oiseaux*). **Free Trade Hall,** Peter St, Manchester (0161-834 1712), Thur 9, 7.30pm. (5)

**TIPPETT FESTIVAL:** The London Symphony Orchestra's 90th birthday tribute to Sir Michael Tippett opens tomorrow with a performance of the work that has brought him greatest fame, the wartime oratorio *A Child of Our Time*. It is as simple and direct an emotional statement as Tippett ever made, and has not dated at all. Sir Colin Davis conducts. In the concert's first half, incongruously, Kasia and

includes Ravel, Stravinsky and Messiaen (with Messiaen's widow, Yvonne Loriod, the piano soloist in *Requiem des Oiseaux*). **Free Trade Hall,** Peter St, Manchester (0161-834 1712), Thur 9, 7.30pm. (5)

**LA BOHEME:** Angela Gheorghiu, the Romanian soprano who captured all hearts with her Violetta in December, returns to Covent Garden to sing Mimi in the popular Copley production of Puccini's relentless tearjerker. There is a new tenor for Rodolfo, always an event, in Johan Botha, and stalwart support from Marie McLaughlin and Anthony Michaels-Moore. The conductor is the Australian maestro Simone Young. **Royal Opera House,** Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), Fri 10, 7.30pm. (5)

## Ruth Gledhill was invited to preach at the University Church of St Mary in Oxford

## AT YOUR SERVICE



IF THOSE who cannot do, teach, maybe those who can do preach, and those who cannot preach preach. After more than a year of reading the star ratings awarded to his clerical brothers and sisters in *At Your Service*, and after *The Times* joined with the College of Preachers to launch a Preacher of the Year Award, the Rev Brian Mountford decided vengeance would be his. Putting me in the pulpit if not exactly in the dock, he invited me to deliver my own exhortation at the Oxford university church, knowing perfectly well that I could be condemned if I did and equally well condemned if I refused.

As I stood in the vertiginously high carved wooden pulpit in the church, I felt, like Job, the hair of my flesh stand up. This was where John Wesley, founder of Methodism, denounced the laxity and sloth of university members, and was never asked to preach again. I was in the exact spot from where John Keble, in 1833, preached the Assize Sermon which launched the Oxford movement, an attempt to revive Catholic spirituality in the church. Near by was Cranmer's Pillar, from where the author of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* withdrew all his recantations of protestant belief before he was burnt at the stake in 1536. This was once the church of a personal hero, Cardinal John Henry Newman, leader of the Oxford movement and convert to Catholicism, and was where two of the Oxford martyrs, Ridley and Latimer, went on trial. The sickening thud of my terrified heart felt like the



From the pulpit, Ruth Gledhill delivers her sermon at speed

sandman cutting the beam from my eye which I had been too busy regarding the notes in my brothers' eyes to notice. The first meeting of the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, later to become Oxfam, was chaired here in 1942. St Mary's is the church around which the university grew up, and which, in the 13th century, was the seat of university government. The Princess Royal has spoken here, and tomorrow, Desmond Tutu, Archbishop of Cape Town, will preach.

I have often wondered why vicars make so few jokes in sermons, and now I know. There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh, but perhaps neither is in church. I took as my text Genesis 9: 20-27 in which Noah, first tiller of the soil, planted a vineyard and drank so much wine that he passed out and lay naked inside his tent. I earned some restrained laughter by arguing that Noah was not so much biblical as bibulous, but the main thrust was my attempt to understand the

apparent injustice meted out to Ham's son, Canaan. Ham saw his father naked and told his brothers, Shem and Japheth, who covered Noah's body with a cloak, their faces averted so they did not see him. Ham's sin was to broadcast the news of his father's shame to the world. Of course the tale has chilling relevance to journalism today, and led me to speculate whether we are not the latter-day scribes unto whom is given such "woe" in Matthew's gospel. It has even more relevance, I argued, to those celebrities and children of celebrities who seem determined to blame their ills on their parents. But it still seemed a bit much for Noah to curse Ham's child and condemn him to be "most servile of slaves" to his brothers.

Trying to ignore the occasional person who seemed bored or asleep, I went on to argue the case for filial respect, for importance of the fifth commandment: "Honour thy Father and Mother", and for the ease with which parental

Marielle Labèque play the Mozart Concerto for Two Pianos. **Barbican,** London EC2 (0171-638 8891), tomorrow, 7.30pm. (5)

## ROCK

David Sinclair

**CYNDI LAUPER/MCALMONT:** One of life's natural attention-seekers, on stage Cyndi Lauper combines a distinctive musical talent with the energy and charm of a born showbusiness trooper. Support is the equally charismatic McAlmont, whose self-titled debut album has got star quality stamped all over it.

**Brighton Dome** (01273 709709), Tues 7; **Guildhall,** Portsmouth (01705 824355), Fri 10; **Albert Hall,** London SW7 (0171-589 8212), Sat 11, Sun 12; **Cora Exchange,** Cambridge (01223 357851), Tues 14; **Colston Hall,** Bristol (0117 9223682), Wed 15; **Manchester Apollo** (0161-242 2560), Thur 16; **Usher Hall,** Edinburgh (0131-228 1164), Sat 18; **Royal Concert Hall,** Nottingham (0115 9482626), Tues 22; **Sheffield City Hall** (0114 2722855), Thur 24; **Barbican,** York (01904 656688), Sat 26; **Birmingham Symphony Hall** (0121-212 3333), Sun 27.

**THROWING MUSES:** The success of their new album, *University*, may have surprised some observers. But, although it is nine years since the Bostonian group issued their debut LP, *Throwing Muses* is very much an act of the moment. Now a trio, they are led as always by singer, guitarist and songwriter Kristin Hersh.

**Plaza,** Glasgow (0141-423 3077), Wed 8; **Manchester University** (0161-832 1111), Thur 9; **Shepherds Bush Empire,** London W12 (0181-740 7474), Fri 10; **Thovell,** Dublin (010 3531 4544472), Sat 11.

## OPERA

Rodney Milnes

**DER ROSENKAVALIER:** There is a really juicy cast for this revival of the Schötenberg-Dudley-Björnson production of Strauss's comedy — and it changes to another, just as juicy, later in the run. To kick off, we have Felicity Lott's stately, vulnerable but — when the chips are down — surprisingly tough Marschallin partnered by Anne Sophie von Otter's boyish Octavian; Barbara Bonney sings Sophie, and the Baron Ochs is Aage Haugland. Tito Beltrán sings the famous tenor solo, and Alan Ople is Faunaland. Andrew Davis, a fervent Straussian, is in the pit. **Royal Opera House,** Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), tonight, 5.30pm; Tues 7, 6.30pm. (5)

**LA BOHEME:** Angela Gheorghiu, the Romanian soprano who captured all hearts with her Violetta in December, returns to Covent Garden to sing Mimi in the popular Copley production of Puccini's relentless tearjerker. There is a new tenor for Rodolfo, always an event, in Johan Botha, and stalwart support from Marie McLaughlin and Anthony Michaels-Moore. The conductor is the Australian maestro Simone Young. **Royal Opera House,** Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), Fri 10, 7.30pm. (5)

morals and behaviour can be visited upon the third and fourth generation. Concluding that "the story is not about a terrible vengeance, but about actions and their consequences, about the way certain actions beget others", I realised too late that fear had trebled my normal speaking speed. Managing to slow down at last for: "A sin and a good deed have consequences, they are fathers to the deeds that follow," I descended the pulpit with relief, legs still staking, and feeling irrepressible respect for the clergy and laity who, week after week, clothe themselves with trembling in the loneliness of the pulpit.

The University Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street, Oxford, OX1 4AH. Tel: 01865 243806.

**VICAR:** The Rev Brian Mountford **ARCHITECTURE:** Intricate church in the centre of the old walled city, with the tower dating from 1280, the spire from 1315 and the nave rebuilt in the Perpendicular style in 1510. ★★★★★

**SERMON:** Delivered at "break-neck speed" according to Stephen Glover in this week's *Evening Standard*. One star for effort. ★

**MUSIC:** Apart from the *Gloria*, the choir sang the mass, to the Tallis setting. The hymns were little-known numbers from the *New English Hymnal*. ★★

**LITURGY:** Holy Communion celebrated beautifully by the Rev Rebecca Watts, from the 1980 *Alternative Service Book*. ★★

**AFTER-SERVICE CARE:** Offer of parish lunch, plus helpful feedback on sermon. General verdict was "content OK, delivery needs improvement." ★★

**SPIRITUAL HIGH:** At once chastening and exhilarating. ★★★★★

★ stars are awarded to a maximum of five.

## FILMS

Geoff Brown

**AMATEUR (15):** The cult director Hal Hartley steps out of the rut he fell into in *Simple Men* with a cockeyed, romantic thriller about a nymphomaniac nun (Isabelle Huppert), an amnesiac pornographer (Martin Donovan), and some incriminating floppy discs. Hartley persists with his cryptic visual style and circular dialogue, but the plot gives the film more momentum than usual, and by the end you even start to care for the fate of the main characters: two lost souls, amateurs at living, trapped in a muddle of desires, ambition and self-doubt. This is Hartley's most popular film to date. **Lumière** (0171-836 0691); **Odeons** Kensington (01426 914666); **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098); **Renoir** (0171-837 8402); **Phoenix** (0181-883 2233).

**LEON (18):** A taciturn, near-illiterate hitman in New York displays his Achilles heel when he takes under his wing a precocious, orphaned 12-year-old. Bullets and blood galore here, but also much cinematic panache, courtesy of Luc Besson. Jean Reno displays admirable restraint as the zombie-like killer; would that Gary Oldman, playing a corrupt and manic drug enforcement officer, followed his lead. It is a pleasure to find a thriller that takes the time to savour atmosphere, and treats most of its characters with respect, at least until the bullets fly. **MGMs: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096); **Tottenham Court Road** (0171-636 6148); **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666); **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098); **West End** (01426 915574); **UCI Whiteleys** (0171-792 3332).

• More films, page 6

## MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

**GILES:** The terrible family created by Carl Ronald Giles (to give him for once his full name) in the pages of the *Daily Express* seems to have been part of British life for so long it comes as a surprise that it is only 50 years since Grandma made her debut. Before 1945, Giles (now in his 80th year) worked extensively in animated films, collaborating with Anthony Gross on *The Fox Hunt*, the first colour cartoon made in Britain, and during the war made propaganda cartoons for the Ministry of Information. Some recently rediscovered footage is featured in this tribute, along with his early left-wing political cartoons for *Reynolds News*. But it is the actions and reactions of the Giles family which ensure his immortality. **Christchurch Mansion Museum,** Christchurch Park, Ipswich (01473 253246), Tues-Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, 2.30-4.30pm, until Mar 19.

**L.S. LOWRY: THE MAN AND HIS ART:** As a student and long-time resident of Salford, Lowry naturally felt a particular loyalty to the place, and the Art Gallery there has an unrivalled collection of his paintings, as well as having staged the biggest Lowry show to mark his centenary in 1987. Now it has put together a touring exhibition, which provides a vivid, basic guide to the artist's eccentric life and highly individual art. **City Museum and Art Gallery,** Bethesda Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent (01782 202173), Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, 2-5pm, until Mar 19. (5)

## GALLERIES

Richard Cork

**DONALD JUDD:** The grand master of minimalism returns. This new survey, at Oxford's Museum of Modern Art, turned into a memorial show after Judd's death last year. He is seen at his most austere in a seven-unit plywood work, and at his most sumptuous in the richly coloured sculpture of his later years. Some of his multi-coloured wall-pieces are also on view at Waddington Galleries in London. But the Oxford survey emphasises his full range, embracing woodblock prints, furniture and architectural projects. It also documents the ambitious series of sculptures Judd made for Marfa, a remote Texas location where he established a museum of his own and other artists' work. **Museum of Modern Art, Oxford** (01865 722733), until Mar 26; **Waddington Galleries,** 11 Cork Street, London W1 (0171-437 8611), until Sat Feb 11.

**TATSUO MIYAJIMA:** A trip to the Queen's House in Greenwich will reveal the latest ambitious project masterminded by Ariangel, who organised Rachel Whiteread's much-mourned *House*. The Japanese artist Tatsu Miyajima has transformed Inigo Jones's Great Hall into an arena for electric counters. They glide through the darkened chamber, counting numbers at different speeds and glittering like stars. Miyajima's obsession with time here receives spectacular expression, in his first commissioned European venture. **Queen's House, Romney Road, Greenwich, London** (0181-858 4422), until Mar 5; Tues-Thur, 4.30-7pm; Fri-Sun, 3-6pm.

## CHILDREN

LONDON

**Chinese New Year Celebrations — The Year of the Pig:** Traditional celebrations in Soho, with decorations hanging from the windows and street processions, including the famous lion dances. **Gerrard Street, Leicester Square WC2.** Tomorrow, 11am-6.30pm.



See a Chinese lion dance

**A Patchwork Quilt:** This is the story of a grandmother sewing a quilt made from her memories. Based on the novel by Valerie Flournoy. **Polka Theatre for Children,** 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 (0181-543 4888), Age 6 and over. **Previews:** Thur 9, open Fri 10 until April 8. **Thur 2pm and 7pm; Fri 10.30am and 2pm; Saturdays 2pm and 5.30pm. Tickets £6.** (5)

**The Magic Flute:** Mozart's opera set in the world of rock stars, penthouses and the environmentally aware. Also in repertoire with *Ten in a Bed*, an adaptation of Allan Ahlberg's book telling the story of Dinah Price who finds not just the Three Bears, but Simple Simon and Puss in Boots in her bed. **Unicorn Theatre, Great Newport Street WC2** (0171-836 3334). **Tickets from £4.** *Ten in a Bed:* today, tomorrow, Sun 12, 2.30pm; various performances until April 1; *The Magic Flute:* Sat 11, 2.30pm; various performances until Feb 26. (5)

## CAMBRIDGE

**Magic Mirrors:** Quicksilver Theatre for Children presents this play, which explores reflections and images. **Cambridge Drama Centre,** Covent Garden, Mill Road, Today, 11am; **John Falker Infant School, Sawston, Today,** 3.30pm. **Tickets £3.25.** Age 3-5 years (01223 32748). (5)

## LINCOLNSHIRE

**High Fliers:** An exhibition of colourful and original art kites made by artists, children and people with disabilities. **Boston Guildhall Museum, South Street, Boston** (01205 365954). **Today until March 25: Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm; adults 90p, children 65p.** (5)

## MANCHESTER

**Museum of Science and Industry:** Take a trip out of this world in the Super X Simulator; or visit underground Manchester, walking through a reconstructed Victorian sewer. **Museum of Science and Industry, Liverpool Road, Castlefield** (0161-832 2344). **Open daily 10am-5pm. Admission: adults £3.50, child £1.50.** (5)

## MERSEYSIDE

**The Beetles Story:** Learn about the small bugs, not the more famous Merseyside two-legged variety. **Liverpool Museum, William Brown Street, Liverpool** (0151-207 0001). **Tomorrow, 11am, £1. Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, noon-5pm. Admission free.** (5)

## SCOTLAND

**Cinderella on Ice:** Fast-moving fairy-tale performed by the Russian All Stars. Set to Prokofiev's music. **King's Theatre, Leven Street, Edinburgh** (0131-220 4349). **Tues 7 to Sat 11, 7.30pm, Wed 8 and Sat 11, 2.30pm. Tickets: adults from £9, children from £4.** (5)

## YORKSHIRE

**Dolls of the World:** Exhibition of costumed dolls from around the world. **Colne Valley Museum, Cliffe Ash, Colne, Huddersfield** (01484 659762). **Opens today, until March 12. Sat and Sun, 2pm-5pm. Admission: adults 90p, children 45p.**

**Great Expectations:** Spectacular new musical adaptation of Charles Dickens's novel, with Darren Day and Brian Glover. **Leeds Grand Theatre and Opera House, 46 New Briggate, Leeds** (0113 245 9351). **Tues 7 to Sat 18, Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; matinees, Thurs and Sat, 2.30pm. Tickets: adults from £5.50, children half price.** (5)

HEATHER ALSTON

JP 11/15/50



# INSIDE STORY

3

Continued from page 1

an absurdly polite way. I should have known that the very tone of the request meant trouble. I should have realised that this young man's apparent courtesy was at odds with his beer-coarsened face. But I didn't, and anyway it was too late because he and his friend were already on board. The only choice available to me was to throw them out; which, in my state of health and at my age — 54 — was no choice at all.

"All right," I said nervously, snapping at the meter, pulling away from the kerb.

"But I'd be grateful if you didn't smoke," I added, my eyes flicking towards the rear-view mirror.

"Thank you, mate. I'll do what I feel like," came a voice from behind. Oh God, I thought, here we go. I should have known.

"Lanzarote" reached for the handbrake, pulling it sharply upwards. The engine stalled.

"What are you doing?"

"Shut it, mate."

"I beg your pardon?"

"I said, grandad... shut your f—ing mouth!" he shouted, outside now, helping three more of his friends into the back of the taxi.

He threw himself again into the front seat, locking his door as he did so. "Now, grandad, for the last time... get your arse up that f—ing seat!"

"I'm sorry," I said. "I can't breathe." My hand shaking, I reached to turn off the meter.

My emphysema was getting worse, much worse. "I'm licensed to carry four passengers," I gasped. "I'm not taking five."

"You know what your problem is, grandad?" my front-seat passenger asked, his face inches from mine, spittle flicking his stubble. "You're old, grandad, that's your problem. You shouldn't be allowed..."

You're just too f—ing old!" I glanced in the rear-view mirror again. Four pairs of eyes caught the light from the street lamp and I thought I saw a

bottle being raised to a mouth. There was a smell of burning. Someone laughed. A short metallic click — the child lock? A flick-knife? Then silence.

The atmosphere was changing, deepening: a sense of foreboding was seeping into the taxi like mist. Something — something against which I had no defence — was about to happen. I ran my hand nervously through my hair. I thought: I don't need this. I can't go on. I need the money, but I simply can't go on. Every weekend's the same: blood, violence, vomit; young men shouting, farting, swaggering, lying in wait for the unwary. I decided there and then that I would never again drive a taxi at night on the streets of Cambridge.

**"You know what your problem is grandad? You're old. You shouldn't be allowed"**

"Get the f—ing keys," shouted a voice from behind. Three doors burst open simultaneously. Suddenly two of the louts were outside my door. A hand reached through the open window; it felt for the ignition keys, but they were not there. "Give 'em here, grandad. Gimme them f—ing keys!" shouted the ringleader. Another hand pulled at the door handle from outside. I hung on to the plastic-covered handle on the inside, fighting against the pull on the door. Slowly, inevitably, the door was dragged open. My strength was ebbing. I made a despairing grab at the chrome window frame but I was too late. A hand reached for the collar of my shirt. With a final, decisive jerk I was pitched head first into the street. Christ, I thought, these yobos really mean business; they are actually going to kill me.

I lay there, on my back, gasping for air. My efforts at resistance had overwhelmed me. I'd almost stopped breathing. My body made periodic, involuntary movements like a fish, flapping to death, laid out on a concrete sea wall. Silence. Then a shout: "For f—ing's sake leave him alone," followed by scuffling noises. Now I think my inhaler. If I don't get to my inhaler, I'll



"Every weekend's the same: blood, violence, vomit; young men shouting, swaggering," Finbar MacMahon (above) says

suffocate. I glance up towards the taxi and — I don't believe it — there's nobody in it. Four of the hooligans are now squaring up to each other. The big one moves to the other side of the taxi, to intervene. A bottle, missing its target, explodes against the door of a house on the opposite side of the road. As it does so, a man and a woman, elderly, married university types, turn the corner from Parker Street. They stop briefly; on their faces a look of horror and disbelief at the scene confronting them. The man's eyes flick, quickly, to

where I lie — surely he'll raise the alarm? — and then quickly back to his wife. The couple disappear hurriedly, back round the corner, in the direction of Parkside police station. And "Lanzarote" and his friends continue in their eerie, slow-motion ritual of violence. Forgetting me for the moment, they concentrate on each other. There are the sounds of clothing being ripped, of leather shoes scraping along the pavement. But, strangely, the impact of knuckle on bone, devastating as it appears to be, seems to make no noise at all.

"Poofter!" shouts one hooligan, brandishing a thick leather belt. "Poofter!" he shouts again, giving the finger as three of the thugs, tired of the contest, leap the wooden fence and disappear into the shadows.

Not believing my good luck, I drag myself to my feet. I slide into the driver's seat. I grab for the doors, pulling shut and locking each one in turn. I check that all the windows are closed. I reach for my inhaler, taking deep draughts. I sit there for a moment, unable to move, cold sweat running

down inside my shirt. But I'm safe. I keep telling myself. I'm safe... I'm safe!

I grope for the ignition keys under the mat. I find them. The engine starts first time.

There's a shout: "The old bastard — get him!" I can see the big thug, and his one remaining friend through the windscreen. Arms flailing, eyes bulging, "Lanzarote" is incandescent with impotent rage. He leaps at my taxi. His fist smashes against the side window. The window distorts. The engine stalls for the second time. His hand

reaches through the broken window. It finds the keys. I close my eyes, waiting for the fist that I know will break my teeth. I hear the sound of cars stopping, feet running.

I wait and wait but, unbelievably, that fist does not come.

I open my eyes. There are police officers everywhere. In their midst, surrounded on all sides, stand the thug and his friend. Suddenly it is they who are vulnerable. Transfixed, disbelieving, surrounded by policemen, they are now at my mercy.

I lose all control. A sort of madness born of terror takes over. I jump from the taxi. I point a shaking, accusing finger at my chief tormentor.

"That's him, that's the bastard who terrorised me!" I scream. A crowd begins to gather and now I'm ashamed — ashamed, for God's sake — that I've lost control. And then I begin to shake, so violently, I have to place my hand on the roof of the taxi to steady myself.

"Are you all right, sir?" asks a policeman, but all my attention is focused on the thugs as they are frog-marched past me towards the waiting police van. The big one glances in my direction. For a split second our eyes meet. I seize the moment and, horribly, find myself shouting: "You know what your problem is? Your problem is you're *scum!* You're *scum!*" And again, I'm ashamed — ashamed and angry — that I too, with my intemperate language, have plumbed the depths.

"Are you all right, sir?" the policeman asks, again. But, for the moment, I can say nothing; I've just found out something horrible about myself. My statement at Parkside police station was a prolonged, time-consuming affair. The interviewing police officers asked me to recount my experience in every last detail. Endlessly patient, sensitive and solicitous, they calmly talked me through the

events as though they had all the time in the world.

Later, I learned that no charges were to be preferred against the second youth but that the chief thug was to pay £110 for the damage to the taxi, failing which he would be charged with criminal damage. And later still, secure in my own home, I thought: this time I'm lucky, my name's not been added to the list of 15 taxi drivers murdered in the UK in the last 26 months; I'm not on a life-support machine; and the police have got their man. In a way, I felt triumphant.

But it was not really a triumph for me or the middle-aged or, indeed, the police. Because the next day the realisation dawned that things could so easily have gone the other way: that, if luck had not been on my side, I could have ended up another bloodied body lying in a hospital morgue.

So, depressed and beaten, I handed in my notice at the taxi company; driven, finally, I believed, from my part-time job, from

making my living, by a culture of violence.

But all that was a month ago. Last week was quite another matter: three manuscripts and a short story rejected; telephone, gas and electricity bills unpaid...

The telephone call to the manager of the taxi company was quick and to the point.

"Look, I need some work."

"But you said..."

"I know what," said, but I need the money."

"OK, then, sure... if you think you're up to it. When do you want to start?"

"Tomorrow."

A little small-talk, a few pleasantries, and I put the phone down. I thought: just three weeks' work to pay the bills. Just three weeks, then finish. No weekend nights. Avoid the pubs. Quite straightforward, really — if I watch my back.

Photographs by MITCH JENKINS

## Garden revolution from Germany

**Recurring plants, massed perennials and low maintenance are the keys to a radical new style of gardening**

A revolutionary style of gardening may be coming to Britain from Germany — let us call it the New Planting. It is diametrically opposed to one of today's fashions which dictates that we concentrate our attention on the association between one plant and its immediate neighbours, and forget that a theme plant, something which recurs many times over a large area, can bring strength of character to a border.

Of course the immediate contrasts are important, and playing with them is the stuff of contemporary gardening. But recurring plants bring harmony, and a particular kind of relaxation to the scene. Do you not smile at a cottage garden where, for a time, every inch of soil under the rising perennials is a calm sea of self-sown forget-me-nots? Or at some fabulous high-summer border of roses and delphiniums, shot through from end to end with an accidental sub-text of tall yellow mulleins?

In Germany today, a new style of planting with massed perennials is emerging, in public gardens and garden festivals. At its heart is the theory that, given appropriate soil conditions, perennials can be naturalised on their own to form sustainable plant communities, which can be main-

tained with minimal labour. In proof of the fascination for this new style of planting, an international one-day symposium was held at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, west London, last summer, bringing British and German gardeners and designers together to discuss the ideas involved. There was not an empty seat, to the great credit of the organisers, London landscape architects Tim Rees and Brita von Schoenaich.

The "new planting" stems in great part from the work of Professor Richard Hansen, in whose garden at Wel-henstephan much of the theory has been tested and developed. Professor Hansen advocates not the manipulation of a site yard by yard to make the soil suitable for individual plants, but choosing groups of plants, whether exotic or native, which are suited to life in a particular soil type. In his book, *Perennials and Their Garden Habitats*, Professor Hansen divides gardens into a series of typical habitats: woodland, woodland edge, open ground, rock garden, border, water's edge, and water, and suggests plant communities for each.

It would be too easy to say that Professor Hansen is advocating wild gardening and the planting of perennials in rough grass where they can be

left to get on with it. When you see the gardens made in the Hansen style, it is apparent that there is much more going on. These are schemes of naturalised perennials which do not arise like bright lights in a galaxy of grass and weeds, but band together to suppress weed vegetation, after the first year or two. The success of these perennials lies in their suitability to the soil.

There is a noticeable lack of woody plants interspersed among the schemes, which to many a British gardener might seem perversely restricted. But it is just this steppe or prairie-like quality which makes these plantings so different and attractive to British eyes. They roll speculatively across large open areas where we might have a lawn, a scree garden, a wild-flower meadow or *maquis*, but these are taller, brighter, and with much more telling swathes of colour. And there are many theme plants, repeated widely, to emphasise the natural style. Frequently the theme will come from tall, clump-forming grasses such as *Miscanthus*. These may be chromatically discreet but they lend the substance of shrubs, their tall erect or arching forms standing even through the winter months, bleached in autumn and silvered by later frosts.

The question on everyone's lips at Kew was, "What about the maintenance?" Do these low-maintenance schemes rely on a hot continental summer where weeds stop appearing for three months? When Professor Hansen writes: "In April the little white-flowered crucifer *Cardamine hirsuta* blooms in the rock garden and vanishes again by May", I wonder how he would explain why in my garden, given a chance, *Cardamine hirsuta* (hairy blazer cress) would smother everything under four inches for nine months out of 12?

During the symposium at Kew we learnt the importance of creating impoverished soils for the new plantings, with a mixture of much grit and gravel. This certainly restrains weed competition. We also heard about steam-sterilising whole tracts of garden, if necessary by removing the soil from site first. That would certainly offer a good weed-free start to a new planting of perennials.

But is this low maintenance? Steam sterilisation is an expensive operation involving large machines and rarely used here in commercial horticulture, let alone on a domestic scale. Perhaps in Germany ecologically correct operations are happily met as a capital

cost, while long-term maintenance is less willingly funded. I suspect most British gardeners are quite happy to spend time in their own gardens coaxing individual plants to coexist. It can be a lot more fun than soil preparation for ecologically correct planting.

To convince British public authorities that the new plantings demand little maintenance will require a good deal of effort. It will also require a new kind of gardener, trained in keeping the peace between seedling weeds and seedling perennials, and with an eye for a natural effect. It will also require a second symposium, to spell out how it is done. British gardeners are keen enough to praise the variety of garden styles within the UK, but this is something different, a satisfactorily new style, and we ought to try it here.

STEPHEN ANDERTON

● Perennials and their Garden Habitats, by Richard Hansen and Friedrich Sahl, was published in English by the Cambridge University Press in 1993, £35.

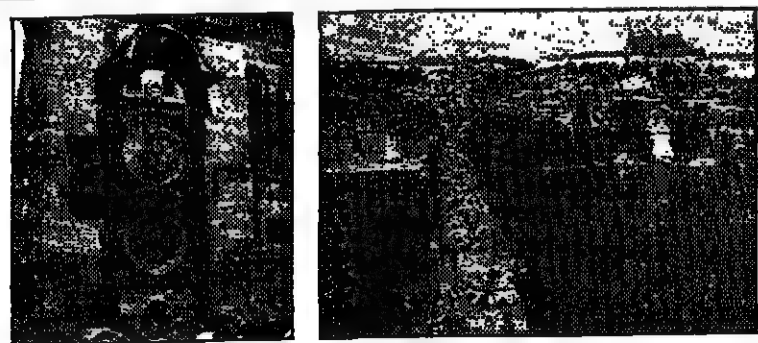
● One of the best ecologically based perennial schemes may be seen in Munich's Westpark, designed by Rosemarie Weiss. It was planted in 1983, as part of the National Garden Festival, and is looking as good as ever.

Gardening, pages 10 and 11



Bright and beautiful: Westpark in all its summer glory

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The scheme at Westpark in Munich was planted 12 years ago for the National Garden Festival. Here, in autumn, the dominant species are grasses and aster







# ARTS

5

## Roll up! The victim show is starting

A small but splendidly virulent war has broken out in New York circles. On one side is Arlene Croce, veteran dance critic of *The New Yorker*, that journal of usually impeccable liberal leanings. On the other side, amusingly, is the entire liberal establishment of America.

Croce declared war in late December by refusing to review a work called *Still/Here* by the revered gay black choreographer Bill T. Jones because it included a video of himself. "By working dying people into his art, Jones is putting himself beyond the reach of criticism," Croce wrote. "I think of him as literally undiscussable—the most extreme case among the distressingly many now representing themselves not as artists but as victims and martyrs."

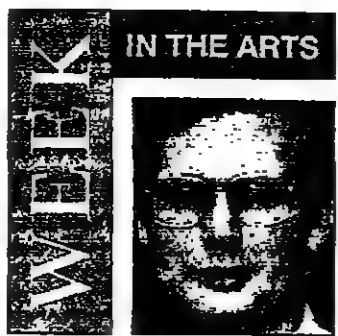
Undiscussable or not, Croce then spent 3,000 words demolishing a work she had not seen. "Intolerably voyeuristic... menace to all art forms... blackmail—you catch her drift."

Bill T. is himself HIV-positive, and has seen his partner and collaborator Arnie Zane die of AIDS-related illnesses. In smart Manhattan one simply doesn't criticise such people's performances. But this was precisely Croce's point. "Victim art," she argued, blackmails its audience into suspending normal judgment.

To ensure that she offended just about the whole of the American entertainment world, Croce then widened her definition of "victim art" to include "these grisly high-minded movies like *Schindler's List* (showered with Oscars while Serbian genocide goes on and on)". Well, yes, Mr Spielberg's acceptance speech at the Oscars was a bit too sanctimonious for my taste, too. But Croce's extraordinary rant has triggered a whole series of celebrity counterattacks. In *The New York Times*, Frank Rich put

the boot in, while in *The New Yorker's* own columns Tony Kushner, author of *Angels in America*, took Croce's attack on "Aids epics" personally. As he was right to do, of course. He accused Croce of being (crime of crimes) right-wing. "Gingrich's clarion call is emboldening his kindred everywhere, and a mighty braying is heard in the land," he wrote. A touch dramatic, perhaps; but then he is a dramatist.

Other correspondents damned Croce's "tasteless flouting of privilege," or for writing "fiction". She was also called reactionary and ridiculous. The "cultural critic" Camille Paglia, never short of an Opinion, was even inspired to defend Bill T. Jones with the memorable observation: "In the Sixties dance escaped the theatre



RICHARD MORRISON

and revolutionised the world." Oh absolutely, Camille. At the Pentagon they worry about little else except *Merce Cunningham*.

In Britain, we don't generally get terribly steamed up about questions like "is it art?". Endless

discussions about "who pays for it" are more our style. Nevertheless, we have come near to debating the morality of "victim art" in the last year without knowing it. You may recall the flurry of controversy a few months ago when one or two theatre critics pointed out how many plays about AIDS were being staged. It was, they maintained, too easy to win cheap applause from audiences that were intimidated into sympathy by the subject-matter. The fuss soon fizzled out.

Then Peter Howson's powerful Bosnia war paintings, and in particular the rape scene that made the Imperial War Museum authorities queasy, raised more questions about emotional manipulation and voyeurism in art.

The subject isn't going to disappear now. Indeed, British audiences will have a chance to judge

Bill T. Jones's artistic merits for themselves this summer, when he stages *Still/Here* at the Edinburgh Festival. And yes, *The Times* critic will review it—if only because it would be a terrible waste of trees to print 3,000 words explaining why not.

Come to the cabaret, old chum! And make it quick, because it may not last much longer, judging from reports from Paris about the ailing fortunes of the Folies Bergères, Moulin Rouge and Lido. It seems that diversissements consisting of young ladies squeaking "oo-la-las" and prancing around while balancing aviators on their heads are considered a little passé by the adventurous business traveller of today. The can-can has become more of a no-no.

I do not want to sound like a

dreadful old fogey, even though I am one. But it does seem to me that much-maligned, totally bogus cultural stereotypes like French cabaret are sources of harmless joy, and should be preserved wherever possible. What would Edinburgh be without that wailing piper in Princes Street to refresh the jaded nerves? What is the point of a Budapest café without a "gypsy" violinist to ruin all conversation until his palm is crossed with substantial amounts of silver? Or a Greek restaurant without bracing bursts of plate-smashing and Anthony Quinn impressions on the dance-floor?

Alas, the French cabaret bosses don't think like that. They are frantically bringing in video screens, holograms and all the other paraphernalia of our microchip age. Indeed, if Toulouse-Lautrec were alive today, he would probably find himself drawing posters of laser-beams. Which, in the opinion of several art critics whom I have consulted, would not be an improvement.

## It's all grist to his Miller

From Tel Aviv to London, Arthur Miller's favourite director is making a splash, Heather Neill reports

David Thacker proudly produces a copy of the *Jerusalem Post*. It has a front-page story about a well-known British theatre director, one D. Thacker, who is abandoning his homeland for a new life in Israel. The British ambassador is quoted as regretting the loss to the National Theatre in London. It turns out to be a spoof: one of the Cameri Theatre of Tel Aviv, with whom Thacker has

been well documented. Since the mid-1980s, Miller has been consulted by Thacker about productions of his version of *An Enemy of the People*, the double bill with *Two-Way Mirror*, *The Price* and *The Last Yankee*. On several occasions Miller attended rehearsals and offered hints about characterisation.

The result is that Thacker had some influence on the final version of *Broken Glass*. Halfway through the London rehearsals, he visited Miller in New York and saw the American production. "By the end of two weeks I was clear that a number of things needed changing. The end wasn't right because Sylvia's 'journey' wasn't clear enough. Besides, in Ibsen, Chekhov and Arthur Miller in the rest of his work, no part is a small part, people don't fade in and out. But Harriet, Sylvia's sister, in particular, faded out. We needed a new scene between the three women—Sylvia, Harriet and Margaret, the doctor's wife."

6 In Miller, no part is a small part

*Broken Glass* has particular resonances in Israel. Set in 1936 just after *Kristallnacht*, it draws parallels between the sudden physical paralysis of a woman, Sylvia, and the passivity of the watching world as the Nazis persecute Jews. It has been playing to packed houses in Tel Aviv since December. Meanwhile, the National Theatre production, also directed by Thacker, transfers to the West End later this month before touring the country.

It was immediately after he had seen this production last summer that the director of the Cameri Theatre phoned from Waterloo to tell his administration to get the rights. Miller himself suggested that they keep the same director. Since early January, Thacker has been directing a much earlier Miller play, *A View from the Bridge*, which opens this week in Bristol.

The close understanding between playwright and director

has been well documented. Since the mid-1980s, Miller has been consulted by Thacker about productions of his version of *An Enemy of the People*, the double bill with *Two-Way Mirror*, *The Price* and *The Last Yankee*. On several occasions Miller attended rehearsals and offered hints about characterisation.

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Miller pondered this over the weekend in Connecticut, where they worked on the text together in some detail. "As I left, he said he thought he knew what to do with the scene. Two days later a fax arrived."



Curtain call: Thacker insists that he has no plans to offer himself for Richard Eyre's job at the National Theatre

for the National Theatre or the RSC (where he has been director in residence since 1993) affords him. "Two mistakes in a row and you know the theatre might close."

A *View from the Bridge* was put on at the Young Vic early in his tenure but, because of other commitments, he was not free to direct it himself. It was the first play by Miller he

had seen as a young director in New York in the mid-1970s and he was stunned by the qualities which he continues to find in his work.

"They are emotionally powerful plays with strong narratives, psychologically intense and politically powerful. And they are language plays. I'd never encountered a modern play like this before. So direct-

ing it is unfinished business," Thacker says.

Miller, now almost 80, is said to be engaged in writing yet another play which will, no doubt, lead to further collaboration with his favourite director. But Thacker's career is taking other directions, too. At the end of last year, the BBC repeated his prize-winning production of *A Doll's House* and, in November, showed *Measure for Measure*, with Juliet Aubrey and Tom Wilkinson, perhaps the most gripping Shakespeare seen on television to date.

Next season at the RSC (where he has already had considerable success with *Pericles*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Coriolanus* and others) Thacker will fulfil another ambition, directing touring productions of *The Tempest* and *Edward Bond's* related play *Bingo* in tandem.

For all the plaudits, the reception of one piece of work still rankles. Just over a year ago, Thacker returned to the Young Vic to direct a musical by Peter Townshend based on Ted Hughes's fable *The Iron Man*. There were problems—

## GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

### RACHEL WEISZ

Profession: Actress  
Age: 24



On the cards: Weisz recently riveted the critics with her sexy, witty Gilda in Coward's *Design for Living* at the Donmar. She is currently re-rehearsing the show with director Sean Mathias for its transfer to the Gielgud Theatre, opening on February 20. She also plays a "nightmare older sister" in the Channel 4 film *Seventeen*, soon to be released as a cinema short.

Her theatrical history: Avant-garde and untrained. She studied English at Cambridge, where she formed the improvisational company Talking Tongues with actress Sasha Hails and director David Farr. They caused annual stirs at the Edinburgh Festival, winning the *Guardian* Fringe Award in 1991. Post-college opportunities caused rifts. Weisz began a television career in the costume drama *Scarlet and Black*. But Talking Tongues has recently returned, creating a devised piece on French courtesans at the National Theatre Studio, a show now looking for a London run.

The family scene: Child of a Hungarian medical inventor—"anything to do with lungs"—and an Austrian psychotherapist.

Schooling: North London Collegiate and St Paul's.

Teenage tabloid shocker: She made headlines at 13, when she was picked out by talent scouts to be in a Richard Gere movie. She turned down the part. Or at least her mother turned it down on her behalf, apparently at her father's insistence. The tabloids were traumatised. Weisz wishes the press would finally get over it.

Glam girl: At about the same time, she started modelling "to earn pocket money in the holidays". She was in *Harpers and Vogue*, and appeared on the cover of *ID* when she was 17.

Her ambitions today: Apart from working with Mike Leigh, "lots of theatre. The classics: Tennessee Williams, Shakespeare. I'd like to end up at the RSC."

Which roles? "Isabella in *Measure for Measure*. Cleopatra when I'm older."

Which directors? "Max Stafford-Clark and Terry Hands."

On herself: "I've got a very strong work ethic. I think I'm very loyal. And I'm obsessive: I get overwhelming crushes, passions for things that are all consuming."

On her work: "I work instinctively. I imagine they teach you ways of approaching a work at drama school. I have no method or received idea about how to do anything, so I'm always right in at the deep end, which uses up an enormous amount of energy. If I've been working, I'm blank by the end of the day."

KATE BASSETT

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**THE SUNDAY TIMES**

## The last modernist

Silence attends Willem de Kooning now. Just as it should. It is more than 40 years since de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and a bunch of brawling New York artists were jubilantly elected to take over the art world from the fagged-out Paris School.

De Kooning alone survives. Still striking-looking, he remains in the roomy studio-cum-living quarters at Springs, a township on Long Island. He can look out from his property, but it is hard for the inquisitive to look in...

Anthony Haden-Guest appraises the life and work of Willem de Kooning, the last of the abstract expressionists, on the eve of a British retrospective—in *The Magazine*, *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

**The Merry Wives of Windsor**  
by William Shakespeare  
"SUPERB... A GLORIOUS NIGHT"  
Daily Telegraph

A View from the Bridge is in previews at the Bristol Old Vic (0117 9877877) and opens on Tuesday. It opens at the Birmingham Rep (0121-236-4455) on March 8. *Broken Glass* opens at London's Duke of York's Theatre (0171-836 5122) on February 24.

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## NEW ON VIDEO: Polite society in New York; rude awakenings in Dickens's London

## WEST END ENTERTAINMENT

## THEATRE GUIDE

- AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'** The Fats Waller musical show, an evening of dancing, tapping, exuberant song and dance. Triplex, Kibum High Rd, NW6 (0171-328 1000). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat, 4pm. Returns in person at the box office from 7pm only; until Feb 25.
- AS YOU LIKE IT** Check by Jow's all-male Shakespeare, spare, inventive, endearingly funny, with Adrian Lester as a renegade Herford. Albury, St Mary's Lane, WC2 (0171-328 1730). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat, 2.30pm. Until Feb 11.
- THE CHILDREN'S HOUR** Clare Higgins and Helen Walker as two schoolteachers accused of being lovers by a lost student. Llan Holman's powerful drama from 1934, directed by Howard Davies. National (8 York), South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2222). Today 2.15 and 7.30pm.
- CINDERELLA** Lindsay Kemp's astonishing reworking of the tale, subtitled 'A Gothic Opera', and set in a jungle palace showing on its own decadence. Superb music by Carlos Mariscal. Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, EC1 (0171-713 6000). Today, 4pm and 8pm.
- THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE** Nigel Hawthorne plays the dispirited Lord Ogilvy and devises a strong cast in this good-hearted comedy about 18th-century greed, ambition and true love. Queens, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5011). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.
- THE DANCE OF DEATH** Strindberg's impressionistic, sometimes comic, view of marriage and hell. Subtle characterisation by Gemma Jones and John Neville. Almeida, Almeida St, N1 (0171-359 4404). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat 3pm and Sat 5pm. Until Mar 11.
- DANGEROUS CORNER** Kath Blain directs an excellent cast in Priestley's psychological thriller about the grey areas in people's lives it is never not to go into. Whitehall, Whitehall, SW1 (0171-359 1730). Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat Sat 3pm and Sat 5pm. Until Mar 11.
- THE LUNATICS** Stephen Jeffrey's excellent portrait of the life and times of the renowned Earl of Rochester. In repertory with The Men of Mode. Max Stafford-Clark directs. Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (0171-730 1745). Tonight, 7.30pm.
- THE LIVED SHOW** Arthur Smith's revised version of his 1989 Edinburgh Festival comedy. Caroline Quentin and Paul Merton play a couple on their way towards sharing a bed. Genesis, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494 5055). Now previewing, 8pm. Opens Feb 7.
- MAMA I WANT TO SING** The longest-running Off-Broadway black musical, based on the life of the Harlem singer Doris Troy (who here plays her own mother). Cast includes the charismatic Chaka Khan. Canterbury, Enfield Road, WC2 (0171-494 5055). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm. Until Apr 8.
- NEW ENGLAND** Richard Nelson looks at the English abroad, behaving just as Americans say we do. Transferring direct and good acting led by Angela Thorne, David Burke and Mick Ford. Barbican Centre EC2 (0171-330 8891). Today, 4pm and 7.15pm.
- ROMEO AND JULIET** Inevitable performance artist Emily Woolf, in her first classical role, plays Juliet opposite Stuart Burt's Romeo. Neil Bartlett directs the co-production with West Yorkshire Playhouse. Lyric, King St, Manchester, W1 (0161-741 2211). Now previewing, 7.30pm, opens Feb 7.
- SAVANNAH BAY** Marguerite Duras's 1982 play for two women haunted by their past. Directed by Kath Magrowitz for the always adventurous Concrete Theatre Co. The last company to play this venue before it closes down. New Grove, Drummonds, Euston Road, NW1 (0171-359 0325). Mon-Sat, 8pm. Until Feb 25.
- THE THREE LIVES OF LUCIE CARROL** Award-winning performance from Lila Baur in Simon McDermott's first production on the love and anguish of peasant life. Theatre de Compagnie began an international tour here. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (0171-379 5389). Mon-Fri, 7.30pm; Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm.

## CINEMA GUIDE

- I LIKE IT LIKE THAT (15)** Cherishful drama of a family life from debut director Carroll Marks, with Lauren Vane and Jon Sims. Midge, Fulham Road (0171-379 2555). Tottenham Court Road (0171-435 6148). Trondheim (0171-434 0031).
- LEON (16)** See 'Cobra' Choice, page 2.
- THE ROAD TO WILLVILLE (15)** Politics and philosophy at a turn-of-the-century sanatorium. Overdone health food satire, with Anthony Hopkins, Bridget Fonda, Matthew Broderick. Director: Alan Parker. Barbican (0171-330 8891). Odeon Kensington (01452 914855). Leicester Square (01452 915653). Midge Arch (01452 914501). Swiss Cottage (01452 914501). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332).
- STRAW DOGS (18)** Reveal of Sam Peckinpah's notorious rural horror film, filmed in England with Dustin Hoffman and Susan George. It still bites. NFI (0171-928 2222).
- THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT (15)** Two drag queens and a homosexual love story in the Australian outback. Joyful and vulgar romp with Terence Stamp and Hugo Weaving. Electric, today only (0171-732 2020). NFI Piccadilly (0171-437 3561). Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). Plaza (0900 885577).
- BARCELONA (12)** Who's Salim's successor to Metropolitan, an agreeable blend of romance, politics and disco dancing, set during the early 1980s. With Taylor Nichols and Chris Egan. Chaplin Picture House (0171-494 3322). Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). Odeon Kensington (01452 914855). Swiss Cottage (01452 914501).
- DEAR DIARY (15)** Delightful, teen-age film from Italian actor-director Mario Monicelli. Midge (0171-437 3561).
- EAT DRINK MAN WOMAN (PG)** Delicate mosaic of Tropic of Cancer from the director of The Wedding Banquet. Arg. Les. Chelsea (0171-351 3742). Curzon West End (0171-399 1223). Rialto (0171-371 8402).
- EVEN DOGWORMS GET THE BLUES (15)** Unweirdy version of Tom Robbins's story novel from old director Gus Van Sant. Uma Thurman heads a cameo-strewn cast. Midge Piccadilly (0171-437 3561).
- FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL (15)** Mike Newell's smart social comedy with Hugh Grant and Andie MacDowell. Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). Plaza (0900 885577). Prince Charles, today only (0171-437 8161).
- THE LAST SEDUCTION (16)** Enthralling story of sex, power and 870,000, with Linda Fiorentino as the femme fatale to and them all. Director, John Dahl. Midge (0171-437 3561). NFI Piccadilly, today only (0171-437 3561). Phoenix, Sun only (0161-883 2233).
- THE LION KING (U)** African lion cub almost loses his father's throne. Most impressive computer-generated Disney cartoon, not meant for little boys. Barbican, today only (0171-330 8891). Midge (0171-437 3561). Odeon Kensington (01452 914855). Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- THE MARK (PG)** Strange marks turn mild bank employees into a warring demon. Inevitable vehicle for rubber-faced Jamie, filled with the antic spirit of 1940s cartoons. Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). NFI (0171-437 3561).
- NOSTRADAMUS (15)** Life and prophecies of the 16th-century legend. Propaganda Euro-putting, with Tchéky Karyo and Amanda Plummer. Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- ONLY YOU (PG)** Maria Montell plays the man of her dreams through Italy. Lazy blend of comedy, romance and ravelogue, with Robert Downey Jr. Director, Norman Jewison. Midge Chelsea (0171-332 5095). Odeon Kensington (01452 914855). Swiss Cottage (01452 914501). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- PRINCESS CARABOO (PG)** Any, amusing historical diversion, with Phoebe Cates as the mysterious girl believed to be a fairytale princess. With Jim Broadbent, John Lithgow, Stephen Rea and Wendy Hughes. MGM Trondheim (0171-434 0031).
- PULP FICTION (18)** Quentin Tarantino's tempestuous crime caper weaves together three tales from the LA underworld. With John Travolta, Bruce Willis and Samuel L. Jackson. Midge, Fulham Road (0171-379 2555). Haymarket (0171-559 1327). Shaftesbury Avenue (0171-435 8270). NFI (0171-435 8270). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- LA REINE MARGOT (18)** Bloody, brooding, occasionally impressive French history lesson, with Isabelle Adjani and Daniel Auteuil. Director, Patrice Chéreau. Odeon Mezzanine (01452 915653). Odeon Kensington (01452 914855). Swiss Cottage (01452 914501).
- SHALLOW GRAVE (18)** Danny Boyle's wacky enjoyable comedy-thriller about three Edinburgh chums and a corpse loaded with money. Chaplin Picture House (0171-494 3322). Gate (0171-727 4043). Midge, Fulham Road (0171-379 2555). Haymarket (0171-559 1327). Shaftesbury Avenue (0171-435 8270). NFI (0171-435 8270). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- THE SPECIALIST (15)** Sharon Stone gives explosive expert Sylvester Stallone to solve her partner's murder. Envy concoction that melts its stars. With James Woods, Eric Roberts, Paul Shaffer. Director, Luis Loma. MGM Trondheim (0171-434 0031). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- STARGATE (18)** Galactus adventures of Kurt Russell and James Spader. Preposterous, delirious but fun. Roland Emmerich directs. Midge, Fulham Road (0171-379 2555). Haymarket (0171-559 1327). Shaftesbury Avenue (0171-435 8270). NFI (0171-435 8270). UCI Whiteleys (0171-732 3332). Warner (0171-437 4343).
- BUTTER** Hypnotic melancolia with anti-genre primings from real American film-makers Scott McGee and David Segel. Evergreen (0171-435 1623). ICA (0171-399 2647).
- VANITY ON 42ND STREET (U)** Aboard film of Anne Gregory's treatment of 'Uncle Varney', caught in rehearsal by Louis Malle's cameras at a despot New York theatre. Wallace Shawn, Julianne Moore, Brooke Smith and George Gaynes head the fine cast. Curzon Picture (0171-361 1231). Screen/BNM (0171-435 3368).

## THE AGE OF INNOCENCE

**Columbia TriStar, U, 1993**  
PREVIOUSLY available to rent; but now you can buy Martin Scorsese's spellbinding, heartfelt version of Edith Wharton's novel about turn-of-the-century New York at a reasonable price. Daniel Day-Lewis plays the lawyer bonded for a safe marriage with Winona Ryder, until the bewitching, unorthodox Michelle Pfeiffer arrives from Europe. Scorsese's camera glides and caresses, uncovering hidden depths in the slightest of social gestures.

## LES DIABOLIQUES

**Arrow, 18, 1954**  
"I PRODUCED it as I would play a game," director Henri-Georges Clouzot told a journalist, and it is a game many others have copied over the years. Yet the tale of a wife (Veronica Clouzot) and mistress (Simone Signoret) plotting a sadistic headmaster's murder still packs a special punch. The shocks are skilful, but the atmospheric details linger the most: the dismal school meals, the swimming-pool scum, the ornamental lion pressed on the chest to encourage drowning.

## THE GOOD FATHER

**First Independent, 15, 1986**  
MIKE Newell was not yet the toast of the world when he made this film from Peter Prince's novel about fathers fighting for child custody. But he was still a good director, alive to the prickly issues and social nuances of middle-class London life embedded in Christopher Hampton's script. The notable cast includes Anthony Hopkins, Jim Broadbent and Simon Callow. Time for a reassessment.

## LANCLOT DU LAC

**Artificial Eye, PG, 1974**  
ROBERT Bresson's masterly film strips bare the Arthurian legend to reveal the cruelty, loneliness and desperation hidden underneath the picture-book surface. As always, the director's rigorous approach demands a patient viewer: get in synch, and his

spare, fragmentary shots will stir the heart in a manner impossible with most directors of the slam-bang style. The cast is headed by Luc Simon and Laura Duke Condominas: unknown performers then, and still unknown now.

## MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

**BBC, U, 1994**  
NO SOONER is the BBC's Dickens dramatisation off our screens than it bounces into the shops in a double video pack that runs for 337 minutes and takes up more shelf space than the novel itself. Dickens's tale of greed and hypocrisy is brilliantly transferred from page to screen; and Paul Scofield, as the Chuzzlewit whose promised inheritance brings out the worst in his fellow men, gives an object lesson in clean and precise character acting.

## PUBLIC ACCESS

**Imagine Home Entertainment, 18, 1993**  
BRYAN J. Singer's debut feature, available to rent, contains wisps of ideas about American society and media manipulation, though they never find proper form. As compensation, he creates a strongly disquieting atmosphere and secures a charismatic performance from Ron Marquette as the eerie stranger who takes control of a phone-in television show and encourages citizens to spill the beans about their small, clean town. File under "flawed but promising".

## SEASON OF THE WITCH

**Redemption, 18, 1972**  
GEORGE A. Romero earned his place in the horror books with the marching zombies of his first movie, *Night of the Living Dead*. This little-known film, also known as *Hungry Wives and Jack's Wife*, forgoes blood and gore for an edgy, fascinating depiction of a restless housewife (Jan White) who never looks back after reading a book called *To Be a Witch - A Primer*.

GEOFF BROWN

Mind your manners: Winona Ryder and Miriam Margolyes in *Age of Innocence*

## Take a whirl in virtual Vienna

If you cannot get to *Der Rosenkavalier* at Covent Garden, put it on the box

Deutsche Grammophon's *Rosenkavalier*, filmed live at the Vienna State Opera last March, offers a substantial taste of the performances of Strauss's comedy at Covent Garden throughout this month. Tonight, Vienna and the Royal Opera share the three leading ladies: Felicity Lott (the Marschallin), Anne Sofie von Otter (Octavian) and Barbara Bonney (Sophie), a winning combination if ever there was one. Later in February, when casts change, Vienna's Kurt Moll arrives to sing Baron Ochs. The only main element the Garden cannot offer is Carlos Kleiber — though probably not through want of trying. The Vienna production is by Otto Schenk. It grew from a famous staging made for Munich, which was also filmed by Uteel and put on LaserDisc with the reigning trio of the day, Gwyneth Jones, Fassbender and Poppe. Kleiber again was in the pit. For Vienna, Schenk cut some of the glass and glitter, including the chandelier in Herr von Farnal's mansion, which the cynics claimed cost more than the annual subsidy of a small opera house. But he stayed with baroque and emphasised even more the feeling of *alt Wien*. Nowhere is it more evident

than in the Gasthaus of Ochs's rendezvous, with its low ceilings, tunnels and alcoves: it is a drinking den from one of the seedier parts of the city. Schenk knows his Vienna inside out and remains faithful to every letter of Hofmannsthal's text. Felicity Lott's Marschallin now takes its place among the great interpretations. At the start she is feline, almost kittenish in her sensual pleasure. But the Marschallin's greater concern is with transience. With soft-breathed phrases, shrouded in melancholy, Lott suggests that time is passing — and not just in the middle of the night. At the close of Act I her face seems to age visibly under the camera's scrutiny. In Act III the poised has returned. She leads off the trio gloriously and with a half-swivel of the head acknowledges that another chapter is closed. Anne Sofie von Otter's Octavian is her equal, intent too on showing every face of the character. In the bedroom

the Count is bright-eyed and bushy-winged, but Otter is careful to maintain an aura of well-bred arrogance, with more than a hint of selfishness. Octavian, with his ramrod posture at Silver Rose presentation time, has all the makings of a fine hussar and later, perhaps, a sturdy diplomat. Von Otter has enough fun as a toothy "Marianne" to make one wonder why she has sung so few comedy roles on stage. But it is as the lover she excels. Barbara Bonney sounds a shade shrill at times in the latter role, but she shows a bit more spirit than most. Sophie, Kurt Moll is right in the grand tradition of Viennese Ochs, helibent on the delights of the flesh and the cellar, with a little music, preferably in waltz time, thrown in. The State Opera's supporting cast oozes experience. Gottfried Hornik's Farnal begins as a mole-like creature, but there is enough glint behind his spectacles to suggest that he had no

trouble in amassing the wealth to build himself a nice palace and marry his daughter off into the aristocracy. Heinz Zednik's Valzachi is a Roman rotter and the veteran tenor Waldemar Kment makes a brief appearance as the Marschallin's major-domo. Only the Italian Tenor could have done with classier casting. The cameras may not make the most of the two great entrances in *Rosenkavalier*, Octavian's in Act II and that of the Marschallin in Act III. But all credit to them for cutting to Carlos Kleiber in the pit at the moment of Ochs's final humiliation. Kleiber clearly enjoyed that he seems to enjoy everything in Strauss's opera. The touch is feather-light in the waltzes and shimmering when passion is in the air. Following the deaths of Karajan and Böhm, Kleiber is now the master of the Rose. Both video and LaserDisc come with a synopsis rather than a libretto: the disc promises subtitles on teletext to those with the right equipment.

JOHN HIGGINS

Der Rosenkavalier, Deutsche Grammophon 1745 072 443-3 (2 tapes), LaserDisc 072 443-1 (2 discs)

Theatre, opera, musicals, museums: how many of London's arts centres can you visit in a day? Find out on February 18

## The world of arts in a day

## THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

MOST people who have been to a show have wanted to go backstage. On February 18 Theatre Club members will get their chance when, as part of the London Arts Season, arts organisations will open their doors to the public. Among the attractions are workshops conducted by English National Ballet and the Unicorn Theatre. There are also tours of the London Coliseum (with the chance to buy reduced-price tickets for English National Opera's production of *Rigoletto*) and the New London Theatre, home of the musical *Cats*, where members will be able to meet leading lights of the *Cats* team.

Also taking part in the open day are the Theatre Museum, the Royal Academy of Arts (where club members can visit the rarely seen private rooms) and the Photographer's Gallery. There will also be the chance to try on the armour and handle the weapons housed in the Wallace Collection.

All this is available for just £5 per person (or £12 for a family of four). For full details, telephone 0171-814 5088 and ask for the Open House leaflet. Tickets must be booked in advance



Take a look at the world through the visor of a centuries-old suit of armour at the Wallace Collection — see first item

## LONDON

**Bush Theatre**  
Feb 15-Mar 18  
● EWEN BREMNER and Katrin Cartlidge star in *The Present*, written and directed by Nick Ward. Theatre Club members can buy tickets for £6 (normally £9.50). Tel 0181-743 3388

## PERTH

**Perth Theatre**  
Feb 20-25  
● THE Victorian thriller *The Late Edwin Black*, by William Diller and William Morum, has enough twists to keep you guessing until the final curtain. Club members can save 20 per cent on top-price tickets (normally £11). Tel 01738 624576

## MUSSELBURGH

**Broadway Theatre**  
Feb 21-23  
● RAYMOND ROSS'S *The King of Witches* chronicles the mysterious events that surrounded the enigmatic James I (James VI of Scotland). Members can buy two tickets for the price of one (normally £7.50). Tel 0131-665 2240

## HARROGATE

**Harrogate Theatre**  
Feb 17  
● SHARP, shocking, side-splittingly funny: *Bouncers*, John Goddard's hilarious par-

## This week's special offers

ody of modern urban nightlife, is a celebratory — and cautionary — tale of British youth at play. Members can buy two stalls or circle tickets for the price of one (normally £10 and £11.50). Tel 01423 502116

## MANCHESTER

**Contact Theatre**  
Feb 6-11  
● IN *Criminals in Love*, by the Canadian writer George F. Walker, two young lovers find themselves propelled into a ludicrous world of sinister threats and the explosive reality of bombs. The future is bleak, the humour black, but hope never dies. Club members can buy two tickets for the price of one (normally £8 and £9). Tel 0161-274 4400

## DERBY

**Playhouse**  
Feb 21-23  
● MARK CLEMENTS directs, and Russell Dixon takes the lead role in *Richard III*. Shakespeare's story of evil political ambition. Club members can buy two tickets for the price of one (normally £10). Tel 01332 363275

## EPSOM

**Playhouse**  
Feb 8-11  
● A TALE of desire and retribution set in the South Seas during the 19th century. *The Bottle Imp* is an epic story of love between two people struggling to overcome great odds, drawn from the vivid imagination of Robert Louis Stevenson. Members can buy tickets for £8 (normally £10). Tel 01372 742555

## BRIGHTON

**Theatre Royal**  
Feb 14-18  
● SOAR high above the rooftops with Peter, Tinkerbell and the Darling children on a magical journey to Never Never Land in *Peter Pan - The British Musical*, starring Terence Donovan and Nicola Stapleton. Tickets £9 (normally £17.50). Tel 01273 284888

## MILFORD HAVEN

**Torch Theatre**  
Feb 14-18  
● JUST after the war, Ensa officials in Cairo paired Tommy Cooper with the cheery metal worker and small-time entertainer Frankie Lyons. The story of this short-lived, ill-fated comedy duo is told in *Franky and Tommy*, by Garry Lyons. Theatre Club members can buy tickets for £4.50 (normally £7.50). Tel 01646 695267

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## ARTS

7

RECORDINGS: dEUS come out best from another worst-case scenario; Korngold receives his long-awaited due; Solti tackles the creation

## POP SINGLES

David Sinclair

## ■ DEUS

**"Hottelounge (Be The Death Of Me)"**  
Bang! Island 854 190\*\*\*  
It is not often we have cause to celebrate the contribution of Belgium to the rich tapestry of rock'n'roll, but dEUS, the typographically-challenged band from Antwerp, are clearly the exception which proves the rule.

Lifted from their widely-acclaimed album, *Worst Case Scenario*, "Hottelounge (Be The Death Of Me)" is a slow, spooky evocation of road sickness which combines a melancholy, descending bass line with lots of strange guitar effects that swirl around the vocal to produce a mood of utter desolation. It is stark, sad and strangely irresistible.

## POP ALBUMS

David Sinclair

## ■ VARIOUS ARTISTS

**Beat The Retreat — Songs by Richard Thompson**  
Capitol 7243 8 31482\*\*

With the release of *Beat The Retreat*, which features an impressively varied roster of artists performing songs written by Richard Thompson, the mystery of who exactly these "tribute" albums are being aimed at deepens.

Admirers of Thompson will doubtless be curious to hear what Bonnie Raitt makes of "When The Spell Is Broken" or how Los Lobos tackle "Down Where The Drunkards Roll". And fans of R.E.M., for instance, will certainly want to hear their heroes' version of "Wall Of Death", the album's flagship track.

But the plot starts to get a bit tangled when English folk singer June Tabor's straight-laced version of "Genesis Hall" gives way to Dinosaur Jr's thunderous rendition of "I Misunderstood". And whether or not aficionados of folk troubadours Maddy Prior and Martin Carthy will find their delicate acoustic renderings of "Farewell, Farewell" and "The Great Valerian" provide a sufficient incentive to brave the turbo-charged version of "Turning Of The Tide" supplied by grunge godfather Bob Mould is open to doubt.

In any case, none of them can hold a candle to Thompson's own, uniquely spellbinding delivery of these songs. Of the singers, it is Mould who, surprisingly, comes closest to matching the master's dark, disdainful tone, while most of the guitarists (the sensible ones, anyway) do not even try to compete.

## JAZZ

Clive Davis

## ■ JACKY TERRASSON

**Blue Note CDP-8293512\*\*\***

JUST as every short story coming out of America seems to begin with a Raymond Carver-ish line about going to the fridge for a six-pack, so jazz recordings by young guns all tend to start in a uniform style: a splashy pop figure played over a frenetic beat with just enough clever-clever rhythmic displacement to remind us that this is 1995, not 52nd Street.

It is a sign of Jacky Terrasson's self-confidence that he goes about things in an utterly different way, announcing his arrival with a thunderous bass chord which rolls ominously across Leon Parker's relaxed, funky drums.

An enigmatic trickle of notes and staccato chords follows before the first vague outline of "I Love Paris" begins to emerge. Terrasson then puts the familiar melody through a set of precise, calligraphic variations, momentarily pausing to explore a caressing ballad tempo. Like all truly original players, he leaves his imprint on the song before he even begins to unfurl the whole of his improvisation.

Of Franco-American parentage, he took formal studies in Paris before entering the Berklee School of Music and working the clubs in New York. Stints with Arthur Tay-



Antwerp's finest dEUS, five more Belgians on the elusive road to fame, conjure up a spooky evocation of road sickness with "Hottelounge"

## OPERA

John Higgins

## ■ MOZART

**La clemenza di Tito**  
Bartoli/Bonney/Jones/  
Heilmann/Academy of  
Ancient Music/Hogwood  
L'Oiseau Lyre 444 131-2  
(2 CDs)\*\*

FOR an opera heard none too often in this country, at least in this country, Mozart's final stage work is excellently served on disc. Colin Davis's pioneering set (Philips) with Berganza as Sesto still stands up exceedingly well. More recently there has been John Eliot Gardiner (Archiv) with Anne Sofie von Otter (tonight's Octavian) in the Covent Garden *Rosenkavalier* as another outstanding Sesto. And only last spring Teldec brought out Harmoncourt's elevated reading, with Lucia Popp's Vitellia, her final recording.

L'Oiseau Lyre's *Clemenza* is not going to knock any of these off their perch, but it will appeal to those who want a version on authentic instruments: Christopher Hogwood makes the Academy of Ancient Music sound a much larger band than it actually is in the two finales and uses brisk, no-nonsense tempos.

And it will attract the many admirers of Cecilia Bartoli. The dark, almost masculine timbre of her lower register fits her well for Sesto, who unwisely rates the charms of Vitellia above loyalty to his emperor, Tito. In Rome in AD 79 losing one's head in love was a sure way to come close to losing it altogether. The florid demands of this most difficult of roles give Bartoli no problems and she is at her best when Mozart is at his most taxing and dramatic. But she does not probe Sesto's predicament in the way Ann Murray did for Harmoncourt or Teresa Berganza before her. An aria such as "Parto, parto" could do with a bigger emotional charge.

Della Jones is most disappointing as Vitellia, the lady who causes all the trouble at the imperial court. She throws herself into the role, emphasising that Vitellia is a villainess. But too much of the singing is squally, and when it comes to an extended number, such as "Non più di fiori" where Vitellia at last shows

remorse, she cannot hold a candle to Popp.

Among the plus points there is Uwe Heilmann in the title role, except when briefly moved to anger. The voice sounds a bit young, more a Tamino than a Tito, but Heilmann handles his arias gracefully. The recitative is less impressive: sometimes



Bartoli: masculine timbre

not just secco but plain arid. He is not the only offender here and Christopher Hogwood must take some of the blame for tedium when most of the orchestra takes a rest.

The pair of lovers, Annio and Servilia, are most winningly played by Diana Montague and Barbara Bonney. Both turn in performances to make one wish they had more to sing, but they help to raise the set into the two-star category.

## ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

## ■ KORNGOLD

**Sinfonietta; Sorsum Corda**  
BBC Philharmonic/Barnert  
Chandos CHAN 9317\*\*\*  
ONLY 14 when he composed the Sinfonietta, Op 5, Erich Wolfgang Korngold's astonishing precocity almost beggars belief. The four movements that make up this work are so full of invention, and so richly scored, that many a composer twice his age would have been proud of them. Indeed, Strauss, Sibelius and many others commented approvingly on it, and it was widely performed until the rise of Nazism, when it disappeared from the repertoire for half a century.

Mathias Bamert's splendid new recording with the BBC

Philharmonic should help to win it more admirers, for it does full justice to Korngold's effusive lyricism and bright, warm orchestral colours. After a typically imaginative first movement, based on a motto theme, the Scherzo quickens the pace still further, but gives way to a gorgeous trio in F sharp major, in which long lyrical lines are effortlessly spun out.

The *Sorsum Corda*, contrary to the suggestion of its title, is also a purely orchestral work. The title (translated as "Lift up your hearts") was adopted by the composer "merely to suggest the general character of the work, a mood of struggle and aspiration, a joyous deliverance out of storm and stress". Even more determinedly exuberant than the Sinfonietta, the *Sorsum Corda* poses considerable difficulties for the performers, but one would hardly guess it in this confident account.

Many years later Korngold was to use its main theme in his score for Errol Flynn's *Adventures of Robin Hood*. The score won an Oscar and Korngold took great satisfaction in the new-found popularity of music that had originally been received with less than enthusiasm.

## CONTEMPORARY

Stephen Pettitt

## ■ ADAMS

**Chamber Symphony/  
Grand Piano Music**  
London Sinfonietta/Adams  
Elektra Nonesuch  
7559-79219-2\*\*

JOHN Adams's Chamber Symphony (1992) is among his most thrilling and substantial works, an essay in fast, brilliant, sometimes comic but never cheap parody that gives the lie to his minimalist — though not his listener-friendly — tag. It is also fiendishly hard to play, though the London Sinfonietta dispatches it with due aplomb.

The composer claims that the piece has an affinity with Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony in its fast and furious action; closer to that, perhaps, than to the cartoon music which was its other inspiration. There is also a lot of Stravinsky here — the opening is a dead ringer for *The Soldier's Tale*.

Grand Piano Music, the

progressions, the hallmarks of minimalism and pop music alike.

■ REICH  
**Tehillim/Three Movements**  
Schoenberg Ensemble/  
de Leeuw/London Symphony  
Orchestra/Tilson Thomas  
Elektra Nonesuch  
7559-79295-2

IF you like tribal jazzy-rhythmed ostinatos, if you enjoyed being hypnotised into a state of unthinking, if you do not want to feel any sense of drama or challenge, then you will probably enjoy anything by Steve Reich. I am afraid I hate it. Listening to Reich's music is like staring at a blank plaster wall.

*Tehillim* dates from 1981. It is a setting of psalms in ancient Hebrew and purports not to be melodically repetitive. Nevertheless, the music has an unbearable sense of blandness, even in the praising of the Lord with the various instruments of Psalm 150, a charismatic religious ritual without the charisma.

*Three Movements* for orchestra at least changes the quality of timbre (*Tehillim* is scored for female voices and ensemble). It dates from 1986 and is given here with appropriate machine-like precision by the London Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas. Some of the overlapping effects and voice exchanges are superficially quite interesting. But the piece remains effect-music, with no hint of a man bothering with any struggle to express himself. Frightening, in a way.

## CHORAL

Hilary Finch

## ■ HAYDN

**Die Schöpfung**  
Chicago Symphony  
Orchestra/Solti/soloists  
Decca 443 445-2 (2 discs)\*\*

NEVER has there been such a cornucopia of *Creations* in the catalogue. For those who look for a sense of prelapsarian innocence and constant surprise in the characterisation of fish and fowl, period-instrument performances, such as those of Kuijken, Hogwood and, most recently and excellently, Bruno Weil, will continue to delight. Those who prefer to luxuriate in the exhilaration of the fortunate

fall and the full sensuousness of human response can still do no better than turn to von Karajan's two versions.

But those who want the best of both new worlds may at last have found their paradise in Sir Georg Solti's new version with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. Like Hogwood and Weil, he uses Peter Brown's new edition, based on Haydn's own performance material, with its niceties of phrasing and dynamics transforming the behaviour of modern instruments, and with its wonderfully muted brass in one of the most potent representations of chaos on disc. An unnecessarily self-denying forte piano adds its sweet voice to the continuo group.

The long, translucent crescendo of the strings through



Solti: best of both worlds.

the sunrise recalls at once Sir Georg's way with *The Magic Flute*, another work of enlightenment whose sensibilities and ideas *The Creation* so fascinatingly shares. Both tingle with an excited engagement with the score: the choruses romp through their frugal writing and spring into easy rapport with orchestra and soloists.

The three angels have a high old time: tenor Herbert Lippert as Uriel celebrating order as much as light, baritone René Pape as an angel Raphael, and Ruth Ziesak re-creating lark, dove and nightingale in turn as an incomparable Gabriel. She doubles as Eva and in that role is (alas!) the very picture of winsome submission to Antioch Scharinger's warmly proteive, primeval bass Adam.

\* Worth hearing  
\*\* Worth considering  
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Hellebores can add colour on the greyest of days, says George Plumptre. The Times Gardener

## GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON  
replies to readers' letters

**Q** I want to replace some fast-growing conifers with evergreen shrubs no more than 8ft high. There are drains running through the ground near by, and the soil is clay. What species should I plant? — G.R. Jones, Loughton, Essex

**A** Avoid shrubs that belong to the heather family (*Ericaceae*) such as rhododendrons and pieris. Apart from those, there are laurels, which are tough and would not balk at ground impoverishment by conifers. If you enrich the soil, you could plant less crude evergreens such as sweetly scented *Osmanthus delavayi*, *x burkwoodii* and *decoloratus*. *Mahonia 'Charity'* and *lamarifolia* combine scented flowers with architectural foliage, and offer a fountain shape to contrast with the more usual rounded shapes.

If you are prepared for spines, there are good evergreen berberis such as *B. julianae* and *sargentiana*, the latter making a splendid fountain of stems which, at a distance, might be mistaken for bamboo. Non-invasive bamboos such as *Fargesia (Arundinaria) murielae* or *Phyllostachys nigra* are possibilities, as are the berry-bearing skimmias and hollies, green or variegated.

Laurels are the most likely to seek out your drains. For the rest, take a chance: they will be no worse than your conifers.

**Q** Two years ago I was given a potted *Camellia 'Debbie'* which pro-

duced one flower in 1993 and last year. In wild weather, it has been lifted into the shelter of the garage. Occasionally, it has shed a few leaves, but in the past fortnight it has shed the lot. What have I done wrong, and how can I rescue the plant? — S. Freeman, London NW9

**A** Camellias, like rhododendrons, require an acid soil so there is a tendency to think that they need the same amount of moisture. In fact, camellias will thrive in surprisingly hot positions, providing the roots are not cooked and do not dry out. It is far better to err on the sunny and dry side than on the shady and wet side.

It is all too easy to sour the soil in a large pot or tub by overwatering or overfeeding. I suspect your plant has been killed with kindness, and that too much moisture and a stagnant compost have destroyed the roots.

Keep the plant barely moist in the garage for the winter, and if there are any signs of life left in spring, plant it out in a bed of acid soil, where its roots can enjoy a well-drained, well-oxygenated soil.

Readers wishing to have gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Western, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times regrets that enclosing accompanying letters cannot be returned.

## Splashes of winter cheer

**R**eturning to my garden in the chill of late January after a warm holiday in Cape Town, I found little to dispel my longing to be back in the South African sunshine. One note of cheerfulness is provided by my hellebores, most of which I planted in autumn 1993. There are only a few plants but their bold evergreen leaves and curious slightly heavy-petalled flowers, ranging from pale green to white to a brownish-red, give great pleasure at this barren time of year.

is not especially rich, but the constant semi-shade ensures the good moisture retention that hellebores like.

The first to flower this year has been a plant with warm, deep-purple flowers. The rounded buds were visible before I went away and most of them are now fully out. They are protected by the growing mantle of new leaves, whose green freshness is as rewarding as the flowers among winter drabness. Most hellebore connoisseurs suggest cutting off the old foliage once new flowering stems have appeared, and this certainly does improve the appearance, as after a full year the evergreen leaves inevitably look tatty and leathery. The main reason I enjoy this plant is because, in its second season in my garden, it has increased from the single flowering stem it had when originally planted to half a dozen, all bearing healthy flowers and leaves.

As a group, *orientalis* cultivars have produced the widest range of flower colour among hellebores. The darkest purple ones are nearly black and others range through mauve to a red, pink, clear white and the greenish-cream that is such a distinctive hellebore colour. The way they carry their flowers, slightly pendulous like tiny umbrellas, invites you to bend and turn the flower upwards, often revealing spotted colouring. This is especially striking when the spots are purple or mauve on cream-coloured flowers. One of my plants that is not yet fully out is densely spotted with mauve on a creamy-white background, and is a source of wonder to my children when I turn the flower cup upwards to reveal the delicate marking. The other hellebores I have are



Helleborus orientalis: George Plumptre's favourite hellebore

*Helleborus corsicus*, a name that identifies their place of origin as Corsica, although they also began in Sardinia. Now renamed *H. argutifolius*, a reference to their thin, tapering leaves with serrated edges, they have bulkier foliage than *H. orientalis* and grow bigger, to about 2ft. I have planted these on the edge of a border in the main garden, a sunny site which they seem to enjoy.

There is a freshness and vigour in the new growth of *H. argutifolius* to produce its combination of foliage and flowers that few other winter-flowering plants rival. And later in the year the quantity of plants appearing makes new growth remarkable. My plants have just reached what I consider the best stage, when their crowns of pale-green flower stems have grown and

the clusters of slightly creamier flowers — bell-shaped until fully open — have just begun to open. Later in the year, the handsome foliage will remain as an evergreen background for spring and summer perennials.

Both my *argutifolius* and *orientalis* hellebores are within easy reach of the house, which I think is important because hellebores merit close inspection. But one of their main qualities is adaptability, perhaps because many varieties are naturally plants of marginal habitat, growing on woodland edges or scrubby hillsides.

My mother has established hellebores in large quantities in her woodland garden, where they are equally happy in semi-shade or a small sunny clearing. But they are just as suitable for growing in a more formalised garden border or bed.

The snowdrops that grow close to my hellebores on the bank in front of the house make an ideal combination. In a few weeks, I will divide the snowdrops — all of which are old clumps — and replant some among the hellebores. As well as the natural increase in the size of my original hellebore plants, I hope to expand their number by cultivating some of the seedlings that *H. orientalis* produces if the flowerheads are left alone.

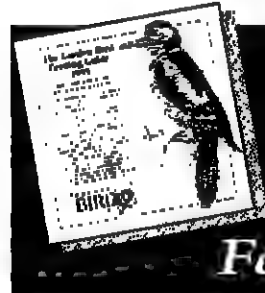
So long as you are happy with not knowing what particular colour shade the seedling will produce, this is the best way to increase your stock of hellebores. New plants rarely cost less than £5 and, for unusual or new cultivars, can be as much as £12. But when buying hellebores, you should remember that a single plant will invariably provide great pleasure. If sensibly planted, ideally in the spring, most varieties live for many years and will steadily expand in size.

Most garden centres and nurseries sell a selection of the more readily available hellebores. A wider range is available from specialist nurseries, some of which are listed below.

● Ashwood Nurseries, Greensforge, Kingswinford, West Midlands (01894 401966); addressed A5 envelope with four first-class stamps for catalogue. Phlox Nurseries, Bunkers Hill, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire (0161 430 3772); stamped, addressed A5 envelope for catalogue. Higher End Nursery, Hale, Fordingbridge, Hampshire (01725 512243); addressed envelope with two first-class stamps for catalogue. Rarer Plants, Ashfield House, Ashfield Lane, Monk Trypton, Leam (01977 682363); addressed envelope with two first-class stamps for a catalogue.

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## GARDENING

11

A garden is being created to celebrate the intrepid explorers who risked their lives to bring back plants from all corners of the world

## A journey through time

On a February night in 1918, Edward Wilson crawled beneath a fallen tree and rolled himself in a blanket. "It was a weird scene in the mountains of Fumosa," he later wrote: "gathered around fires were his porters, two score half-naked ex-head-hunters" crooning and sharpening their knives. Wondering how safe his scalp might be, Wilson fell asleep. But then, dealing with head-hunters was all in the line of duty for the professional plant collector. Gardeners will never cease to be grateful to men such as "Chinese" Wilson, who risked their lives to bring back countless beautiful and exotic species. At Capel Manor, the Horticultural and Environmental Centre in north London, a bold project for the millennium is taking shape. One and a quarter acres of open ground, previously a rugby pitch, is being transformed into the Plantsman's Labyrinth, a tribute to the great hardy plant collectors from the years 1500 to 2000.

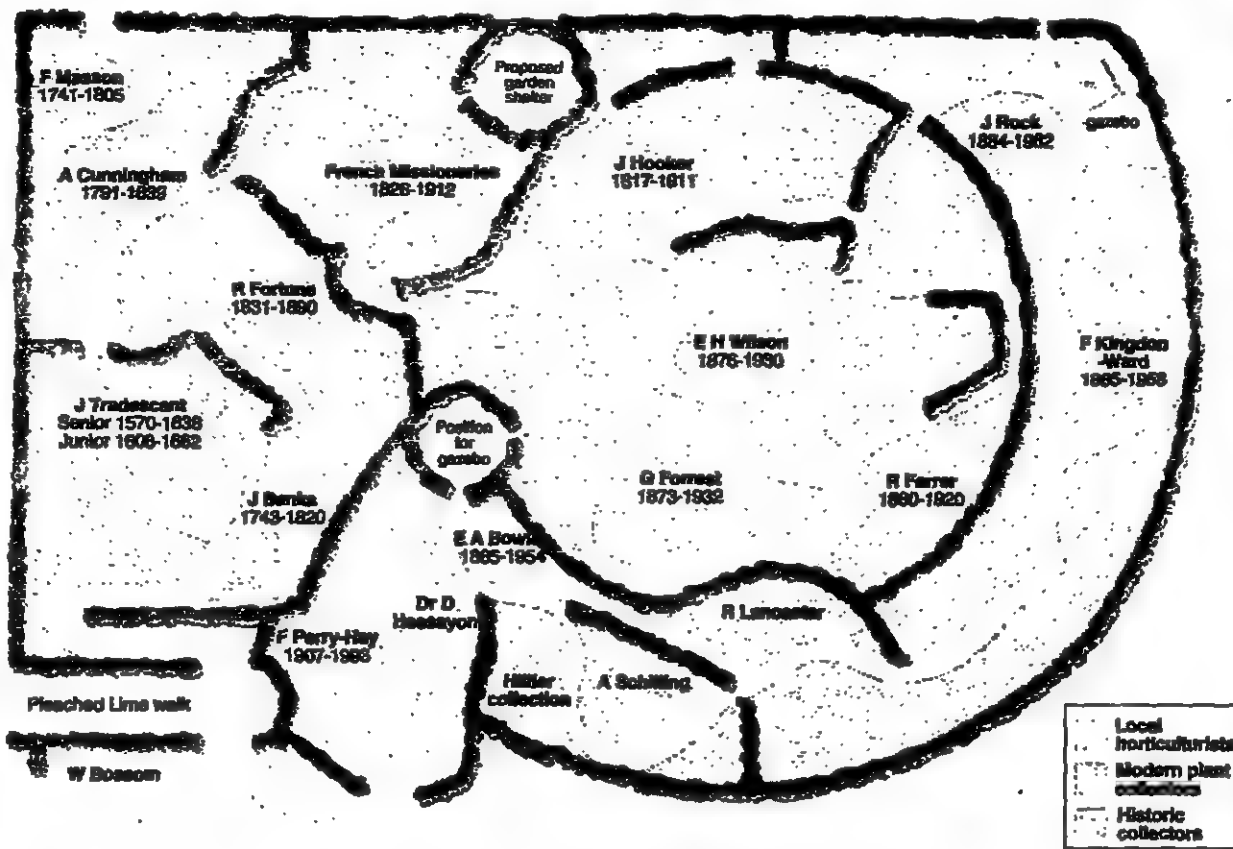
A mere one and a quarter acres to achieve so much? You may think it would need a theme of such grandeur — not to mention costing a small fortune. However, Capel Manor's 80,000 visitors a year well know its skill in fitting a quart into a pint pot. Set in an ancient 35-acre estate bound on one side by the M25, Capel Manor is Greater London's only specialist college for horticulture and countryside studies. As Dr Stephen Dowbiggin, Capel's chief executive, says: "We provide one-stop inspiration for visitors and people wanting to work in horticulture." Each week, a thousand students attend courses. Capel trains garden contractors, park keepers, and garden-centre assistants. There is also a degree course in garden design. The gardens extend this educational purpose to the

general gardener, aspiring yet often puzzled about quite what he or she really wants. Around the attractive mid-18th century brick manor house lie a patchwork of quite distinct gardens. As well as such traditional features as a fine walled garden, parkland, and a good collection of trees and shrubs, there are gardens for handicapped people, demonstration gardens sponsored by Gardening Which? and Chelsea-type gardens paid for by companies in the horticulture business. Capel Manor is therefore emphatically not a botanical garden — hence the idiosyncratic character of its Plantsman's Labyrinth. Dr Dowbiggin conceived it in response to a purely educational problem: how to bring historical botany into the curriculum without jeopardising the objectives of late 20th-century garden management.

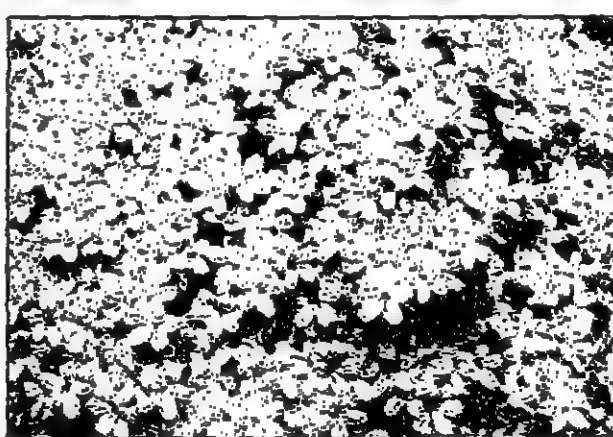
Capel already offered vaguely "historic" gardens, introducing the public to different styles. There is an Italianate-Edwardian holly maze, a temple similar to that at Stowe plus a pond, a Victorian garden of ivy trained up Agarthra, and so on. Purists can wince but Dr Dowbiggin retorts that the vagueness is intentional. Faithful recreations of old gardens are a nice idea but they can be dreary. Moreover, that kind of scholarly knowledge is not much use to horticulture students, very few of whose future employers will want the clock turned back to John Evelyn's or even Gertrude Jekyll's day. Hence the idea was born of a garden recalling great plantsmen through their most prized introductions. Comparable gardens do exist, for example at the Museum of Garden History in Lambeth, south London, at the Chelsea Physic Garden and the Cambridge Botanical Garden. But Capel's garden, highly selective and idiosyncratic, is

## Capel Manor

Capel Manor (right), Ballmoor Lane, Enfield, north London (01992 763849). Gardens open 10am-4.30pm weekdays only (last entry, 3pm); from April, 10am-5.30pm daily (last entry, 4.30pm). Adults £2, £3 from April. Children £1. Quotations from Wilson are taken from the recent biography, "Chinese" Wilson, by his great-nephew, Roy W. Briggs (HMSO, £19.95).



Above: the design for the Plantsman's Labyrinth. Top right: magnolias have already been introduced: Bowles's Periwinkle (middle) and kurume azalea (bottom) will follow



aimed at the general public. Foreign collectors do not feature, except for Père David and the French missionaries, and the Austrian Joseph Rock. One may regret the absence of the Veitch family: the Scotsman David Douglas who introduced the Douglas fir; and the Irish Augustine Henry (we owe him lovely *Lonicera*

*henryi*). But the best-known names are there: the Tradescants, Banks, Hooker, Wilson, Farrer, Fortune and Kingston-Ward, as well as the less familiar names of Cunningham, explorer of Australia, and Masson to whom we owe the cineraria. Translating concept into garden is proving no small

task and there is not much to see yet. The landscaping is done and the site is hedged with hornbeam and (temporary) golden Leyland cypress to break the wind. Ten per cent of the eventual thousand or so plants are in; mostly the trees, such as *Pseudotsuga amabilis* (Fortune, South China, 1852) and *Betula maximowicziana* (Forrest, Japan, 1893), and a selection of the rhododendrons and magnolias that so elated wealthy 19th-century garden owners.

"We'd no idea how horrendous the project would be. We thought we'd get a few plant lists and be away," Dr Dowbiggin says ruefully. Two staff members are researching the collectors and then "sourcing" suitable plants. The hope is that wherever possible, plants will be direct descendants from the original specimens numbered and sent home by their finders. Historic plant collections and nurseries are now being approached to seed or in propagate plants. Hillier's Arboretum, at Ampfield, in Hampshire, was the obvious starting place. The Hillier nursery, founded in 1864, has been responsible for introducing a huge variety of

splendid trees and shrubs into the trade. Hillier's will have its own section for which the curator Barry Phillips is propagating and growing on many shrubs.

Another promising lead comes through the Cornish nursery of Burncoose and Southdown. Charles Williams, the co-owner, belongs to the Williams family of Caerhays Castle, famous in the Edwardian era for sponsoring plant expeditions. The Capel staff were thrilled to hear that at Caerhays grow venerable rhododendrons, kurume azaleas, magnolias and nicholias, which in many cases are the very specimens collected by Forrest, Wilson, and Kingston-Ward. If *Times* readers have plants with such illustrious provenances, Dr Dowbiggin hopes they will get in touch. Tony Schilling and Roy Lancaster represent modern collectors. Since a number of their introductions have yet to make the leap into commercial

cultivation, tracking down stock has proved surprisingly tricky. The truth is that while nurserymen are honoured and intrigued to be given seed of extraordinarily obscure species, they cannot always afford to propagate and promote plants for which there is no demand. Added to which, novelties may well prove not to be "garden worthy". However, if all goes well, the labyrinth will introduce visitors to rarities such as red-flowered *Maehonia gracilipes* and an elegant new honey-suckle *Lonicera deflexa*.

As well as introducing collectors, the 20th-century fringe has been found for garden experts with local connections. Close to Capel is Myddelton House with the garden created by F.A. Bowles — "Gussie" (to the few). Charming plants that we owe to his sharp eye include that old favourite Bowles's Purple Wallflower, and Bowles's Periwinkle. Also hon-

oured is the late Frances Perry, garden writer and pioneer broadcaster; without those protests in 1966, Capel Manor would have disappeared beneath housing estates. Favourite herbaceous plants of hers in the garden will include trines and poppies bred by the celebrated Amos Perry at the family nursery in Enfield.

The most unexpected name is the ubiquitous Dr David Hessayon, another loyal supporter of Capel Manor. Britain's best-selling garden expert reviews his career in a botanical version of *This Is Your Life* using the roses "Lancashire Life", "City of Leeds", "The Doctor" and so on. Of course, neither Dr Hessayon nor local rose breeder Bill Bosson have the stature of intrepid plant-hunters such as Farrer, Forrest or "Chinese" Wilson. Even so, the message the Plantsman's Labyrinth will proclaim to its public in the 21st century remains clear. As Wilson himself wrote: "Plants appeal in all and the history of how, when and from whence they came should add to the pleasure we derive from their presence."

PATRICIA MORISON

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## Gardens to visit this weekend



The formal Dutch water garden at Westbury Court

the views across the landscape which is a precious survivor in the suburbs of London.

Westbury Court, Westbury-on-Tyeme, Gloucestershire (01452 760461). Open during winter by appointment. Adults £2.20; children £1.10.

Since my first visit to Westbury ten years ago, this gem of a formal water garden has been one of my favourites, a unique reminder of the Dutch influence on English gardens during the late-17th century. When

the National Trust acquired the property in the 1960s the garden was in ruins. Restoration work included dredging and rewalling the canals, rebuilding the gazebo, and replanting an 18th-century parterre of box hedging and summer annuals. Now the garden is as delightful as it is historically important.

Ham House, Richmond, Surrey (0181-940 1950). Open daily, 10.30-6pm (dusk if earlier). Free. In 1679 John Evelyn wrote of

Ham: "The parterres, Flower Gardens, Orangeries, Groves, Avenues, Courts, Statues, Perspectives, Fountains, Aviaries, and all this on the banks of the Sweetest River in the World must needs be surprising." That was Ham House's heyday, when it was home to the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale, and it is this period that the National Trust has recreated in its restoration of the garden, started in 1976, using contemporary plans and plant lists.

On one side of the house a parterre of box hedges and gravel paths is filled with a pattern of lavender and santolina clipped into domes — an unforgettable sight on a bright frosty day. Arbours of hornbeam and cherries add to the 17th-century style. The largest area of garden lies to the south of the house where a "wilderness" has been recreated. During the 17th century a formal pattern of paths led through grass to surprise discoveries such as pavilions.

Sheringham Park, Upper Sheringham, Norfolk (01263 823778).

Open daily, dawn to dusk. £2.30 per car.

The landscape park is regarded as probably the most accomplished work by Humphry Repton. It was one of his last commissions, carried out from 1811 for his friends the Upcher family. At any time of year it is a superb place to walk, and visitors should make sure they reach the classical domes temple set up on a small rise, which was built in 1975 by the last Upcher to live at Sheringham. The temple provides memorable views to the house, and to the sea beyond.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE



A chance find in a junk shop inspired the founder of the English Playing Card Society. Now he is leader of the pack

# The hand of fate builds a house of cards



Major Welsh with English heraldic cards dated 1688

One of Major Donald Welsh's greatest finds was an unopened box containing a dozen packs of Wills Capstan Navy Cut cigarettes playing cards dating from the early 1950s. It cost him a few pounds in a junk shop in Bristol nine years ago. Today it is worth several hundred pounds.

Major Welsh, 66, has kept the carton in mint condition. It is worth more than that way. Besides, he has 5,500 packs to choose from when he sets up the card table.

The major is secretary of the English Playing Card Society, which he founded 11 years ago, soon after retiring from the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment. It now has 162 members, including some in America and Australia. He was in his late forties when he started his collection and, since he retired, his hobby has virtually taken over his life.

"The start of my collection was a complete fluke," says Major Welsh. "For my last few years in the Army I dealt with recruitment which involved a lot of travelling. One day I spotted three old leather suitcases in a junk shop in Boscombe, Wiltshire. I decided

to buy one for £15 to replace the battered plastic case I had been using and found it full of playing cards — 264 complete packs, many foreign.

"I found them absolutely fascinating. Quite simply I was hooked, and have been ever since. I had collected all sorts of other things from coins to matchboxes in the past, but never thought of playing cards as collectable items."

Within six months of his first buy Major Welsh realised that such a broad subject needed specialisation. He chose English playing cards, and in 1984, eight years later, he founded the English Playing Card Society with fellow collector, Peter Way, a secondary school headmaster in Hampshire.

Major Welsh looks after the day-to-day activities of the society from his flat in central Bath, a task which keeps him in touch with collectors in seven counties.

"When I travel or go on holiday I often find cards in junk shops, in odd lots at sales or on market stalls, but really the best days for finding unusual packs in these places have gone," he says. "I think this is because people now

hold on to their old possessions and wait for them to appreciate in value."

Most of the trading is with fellow collectors, often under the wing of the society. "Frequently they buy up sets in lots at sales that turn out to be duplicates," he says. "We meet twice yearly, in May and October. I also organise a postal auction four times a year in the quarterly magazine I edit."

It is in this way that Major Welsh has picked up some of his rarest specimens, including a valuable 1668 pack with armorial bearings — bishops,

marquises and viscounts — as well as the usual king, queen, ace and jack (originally knave). Several other members of the society have similarly vast collections, though few have as many English cards as the major.

To have any value, packs of cards must be complete. They must also, as far as possible, be in mint condition. Then they can be worth anything from a few pounds for a single pack from the 1950s — a set issued as a giveaway by Andrews' liver salts or Fry's cocoa would be a typical example — to £20 or more for the same sort of thing from the turn of the century.

English packs that predate the Great Fire of 1666 are very rare, although card games were played here from the mid-15th century, having probably originated in China or the Middle East.

Card games in Major Welsh's collection include countless forms of Snap and Happy Families; also games created around products, sports and events, such as "The Prince of Wales' visit to India" game by Ogilvy of London, dated 1875.

Even in the standard English packs of cards the design of the court cards — king, queen and jack — are extraordinarily varied. Some of the most colourful were produced as giveaways by cigarette and whisky companies, mainly in the 1930s.

Others in the major's collection advertise Fairy dyes, Spratts' dog foods and Hovis bread. There are also unlimited numbers of standard packs celebrating royal events, including the wedding of Queen Victoria to Prince Albert in 1840, and that of Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, to the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia in 1874. Major Welsh has several fortune-telling packs, cards with backs bearing the insignia of armed forces and examples produced by shipping and railway companies, including the Great Western Railway 1924 series featuring photographs of scenic places the trains ran to, or near, such as Torquay, Penbroke Castle, Fishguard and Land's End. The great shipping lines such as Cunard and P&O also

**FACT FILE**

- A leaflet on English playing cards can be obtained by writing to The Worshipful Company of Playing Card Manufacturers at 6 The Priory, Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8NL.
- The International Playing Card Society is at 43 Terapiars Crescent, London N3 3QR (0181-349 2207).
- Where to see collections: The Victoria & Albert Museum, Kensington, west London; The Print Room at the Guildhall Library at the Guildhall in Gresham Street, London EC2; the Bodleian Library, Oxford.



Circular playing cards issued by Sketchley in the 1930s



Box of oval playing cards showing rugby game, 1900

produced souvenir packs that were placed in passengers' cabins.

"Non-standard" packs is the term used when the court cards bear unusual designs — such as the "Michelin Man" kings, queens and jacks in a set produced by the Michelin Tyre Co in the 1930s — or when the cards themselves are an unusual shape as a gim-

nick, such as the round sets produced by the Sketchley cleaning company in the 1930s or the Zulu-shield shaped packs produced by John Waddington and Co in the 1960s.

Major Welsh also has transformation packs where the numbers or "pips" on cards become pictures. A good recent example was the special

set produced by the English Playing Card Society to mark its tenth birthday. Seventy-two sets were printed, and each gold-edged pack costs £90. The fronts, including the "pips", of all 52 cards depict nursery rhyme scenes.

Major Welsh has a similar project in mind to mark his retirement from running the society, which he plans for the millennium. "This time I hope the set will depict famous Bath scenes and historical characters. I am planning it already as the design needs a great deal of organisation and time," he says.

When members of the society want to have a pack valued they generally go to Major Welsh because of his experience. "Putting a price on a pack is a difficult process," he says. "This is partly because in the past English playing cards were regarded by some collectors as the poor relations of some of the more exotic and earlier packs produced in France and Belgium."

"I am currently involved in a postal auction for a very rare pack — one of the first standard packs produced by Thomas de la Rue and Company in 1832. It is likely to fetch several hundred pounds. Generally, it is only when someone decides to sell a collection that it is possible to see in any breadth what others are prepared to pay."

Sylvia Mann, who died late last year, was an English playing card expert and the author of several books on the subject. In accordance with her wishes, her collection of several thousand cards is to be split up and sold by auction and by private treaty some time this year.

When Major Welsh dies he would like his cards to go to a museum. Better still, if he could gain the finance, he would like to open a museum in Bath devoted to playing cards. "I should like to share my enthusiasm with as many people as possible," he says. "Playing cards provide such a wonderful insight into our social history."

CLIVE FEWINS

□ The English Playing Card Society, Major Donald Welsh, Bath (01225) 465218.

Cards with a geography theme, dated 1820



**SALEROOM**

□ Bonhams' 20th-century furniture sale today offers many design classics. A 1932 aluminium chair by Marcel Breuer, who trained with Walter Gropius at the Bauhaus, the legendary German architecture and design group, is estimated at £1,500 to £2,400; and a 1935 "long chair" at £3,000 to £4,000.

□ The private collection of 40 novelty walking sticks for sale at Bonhams on Monday provides a history of this ambulatory aid from the 17th century. Some are topped with animal heads carved from ivory, others double as tobacco pipes (£70 to £1,500).

□ Fans of Dame Joan Sutherland are in for a treat on Thursday when Sotheby's offers some of her stage wardrobe. A 1840s-style ruffled burgundy velvet gown by Zeffirelli that she wore as Violetta at Covent Garden could fetch £1,500.

□ The National Lottery is nothing new, as Phillips shows in its banknotes and scrippily sold on Thursday. The star lot is a poster (estimate £80 to £100) advertising the English State Lottery of 1786, when the prize was £500,000, a bigger sum at that time than the highest win yet in the National Lottery of £17.8 million.

□ Brightly coloured posters for the Monte Carlo Grand Prix in the 1930s are highlights of Christie's South Kensington's 19th and 20th-century posters sale on Thursday, featuring Bugatti, Alfa Romeo and Mercedes-Benzes speeding around the circuit, with the city, harbour and mountains as the backdrop. Prices from £2,500 to £3,500.

□ Bonhams, Montpelier Street, London SW7 (0171-393 3900); Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (0171-881 7611); Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-629 6622); Sotheby's, 34 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-493 8080).

SARAH JANE CHECKLAND

## THE TIMES



Elephant walk on safari in Zimbabwe, where lions also roam free

## Save on an African safari

Book an adventure holiday from a selection of exciting tours to far-away destinations and *The Times* brings you a special 20p bonus. For the price of Britain's greatest newspaper, you may be entitled to a second holiday — a weekend for two in Paris, Amsterdam, Seville, Barcelona, Vienna, Madrid or Istanbul.

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To take advantage of this promotion you must collect four of the 16 tokens which are appearing each day until Monday.

You could spend your holiday spotting lions and visiting the game parks and beaches of East Africa. African Decker Safaris are the only African overland operators to use the Deckerhome, which combines transport with living accommodation in one secure vehicle. Their six-week Southern Explorer safari passes through Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It costs from £995 to £945 (£716 to £756 with the 20% discount), plus £165 for food which is bought locally.

For the active outdoor enthusiast and nature lover, Carrier Tours' Zimbabwe Explorer is a camping safari which takes in Hwange, Chizarira, Matusadona and three days' canoeing down the Zambezi. It costs from £1,580 (£1,264 with discount). Carrier's eight-day Wings Over The Delta safari follows the routes of the bounty hunters of old, starting at the Victoria Falls and ending at Maun in Botswana. It costs from £2,795 (£2,236 with discount).

These are just some of the wide range of holidays, cruises and adventure tours available at a discount or with the added bonus of a 20p weekend break. For further details ring our hotline on 01369-707711. You will receive a comprehensive information pack.



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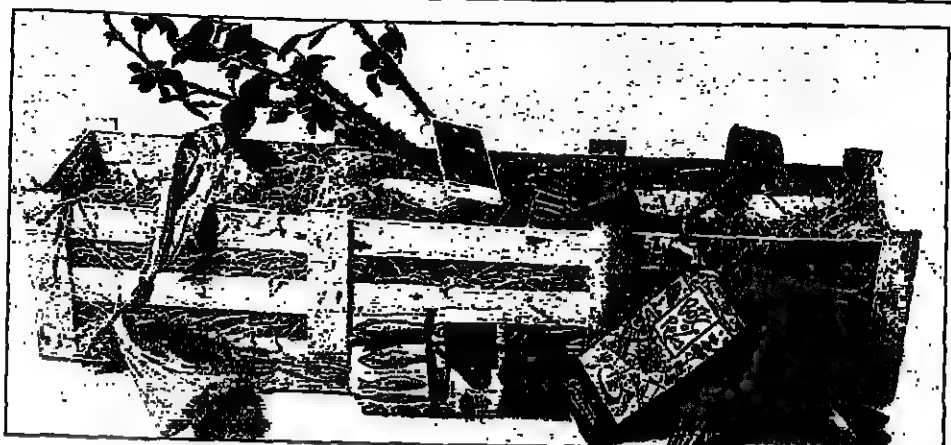


## SHOPPING

13

## Love is: hearts, giraffes, a yellow cab...

...or indulge your loved one with champagne-filled hampers, roses and a real heavenly body



A rose bush and a box of Rose Cream chocolates, £25, from the Gluttonous Gardener

It's hearts and flowers time again and the shops are full of love tokens. To ease your choice of a perfect passion-fanner I have found not only traditional gifts, but also the unusual, the eternal and things to do to celebrate your love. This Valentine's Day, why not give your partner *Love Letters: An Anthology of Passion* by Michelle Lovric (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.99), a beautifully illustrated collection of eloquent love letters from the great and the good through the centuries, with envelopes containing facsimile letters.

And while sighing over the romance of it all, the reader will need sustenance, probably of a sweet nature. Try Marks and Spencer's Luxury Chocolate Assortment (£4.99), packed in a red heart-shaped box, or go to Charbonnel et Walker for strawberry truffles (box, £12.50).

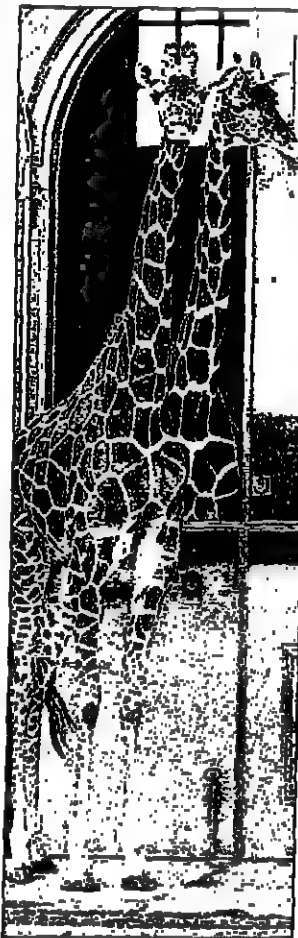
If you're reading *de deux*, the *Tête-à-Tête Valentine's Basket* from The House of Albert Roux is the ideal gastronomic accessory. The satin-lined basket contains two half bottles of Mumm, two crystal champagne glasses, red and black caviare pâté, chocs and pâtés de fruits (£85 plus £10 delivery).

For a traditional token, look at Baccarat's red crystal heart paperweight (£58) and pendant (£53), from the General Trading Company, or Marks and Spencer's Dried Rose potpourri (£5).

For the "flowers" part of "hearts and flowers" call the Gluttonous Gardener, be it for a romantic gesture or a thorny reminder to an ex. The Box of Roses (£25 plus £5 delivery anywhere in the UK) consists of a ready-to-plant scented rose bush and a box of Rose Cream chocolates from Rouco: Say It With Spikes (£15 plus £5) is a virtually indestructible cactus in a terracotta pot.

If you want something floral that doesn't need looking after, consider Aromatique's freeze-dried scented roses: a 200g box of rose heads and leaves costs £30, a box of three long-stemmed roses £10. For something that will last for generations, try "Say It With A Tree", Heritage Conserved, a non-profit-making organisation dedicated to replacing our woodlands, will sell you a plot of land in the Marches (around the Wales/Shropshire

Right: crystal pendant, £53; paperweight, £58, the General Trading Co



Adopt a pair of giraffes at London Zoo, £1,500 a year

border) on which it will plant the broadleaf tree of your choice from a list of 12 (prices from £25). The recipient will get a decorated freehold Deed with a personal inscription, a Certificate of Title and a map showing the exact location of the tree. Each plot has an identification marker for visiting freeholders.

You can also adopt a couple at London Zoo for a year:

giraffes for £1,500; a pair of preening peacocks for £40; or a single black widow spider for £20. The adopter will be named on the Adoption Board at the zoo and will receive a special Valentine's gift pack.

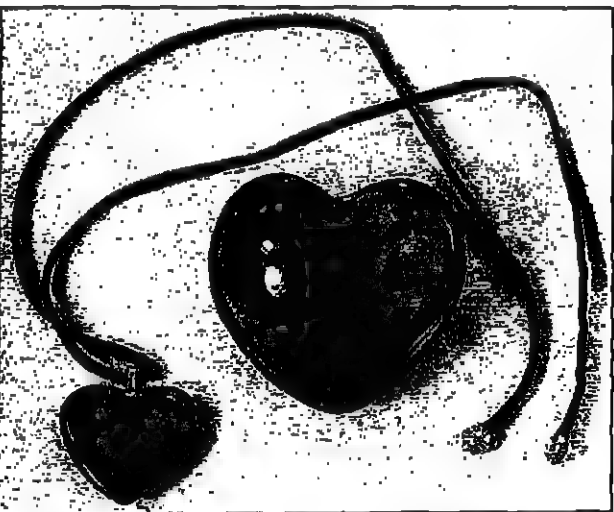
For enjoyable returns, rent your true love a row of vines in France. 3-D Wines can arrange your rental in the vineyards of Jean-Paul Ragot (Burgundy) or Gaston Pavy (Loire Valley) for up to five years, at £49 a year. Each row will yield an average of four cases a year, which you can collect (or have delivered at cost) for as little as £3.84 (plus VAT) a bottle. Include a viticulture trip in your present, or get a 3-D gift pack with two bottles of wine (from £68).

You can even give your inamorata the gift of landed gentrification.

For £69 you can buy the Batham Gate Estate in the Peak District National Park (well, one square foot of it) through Red Letter Days. The gift pack includes an illuminated Title Deed and a history of the property — it is mentioned in the *Domesday Book*, and is reputed to have a ghostly Roman legion. Or consider renting a cottage from English Country Cottages and visiting the Estate for a romantic weekend.

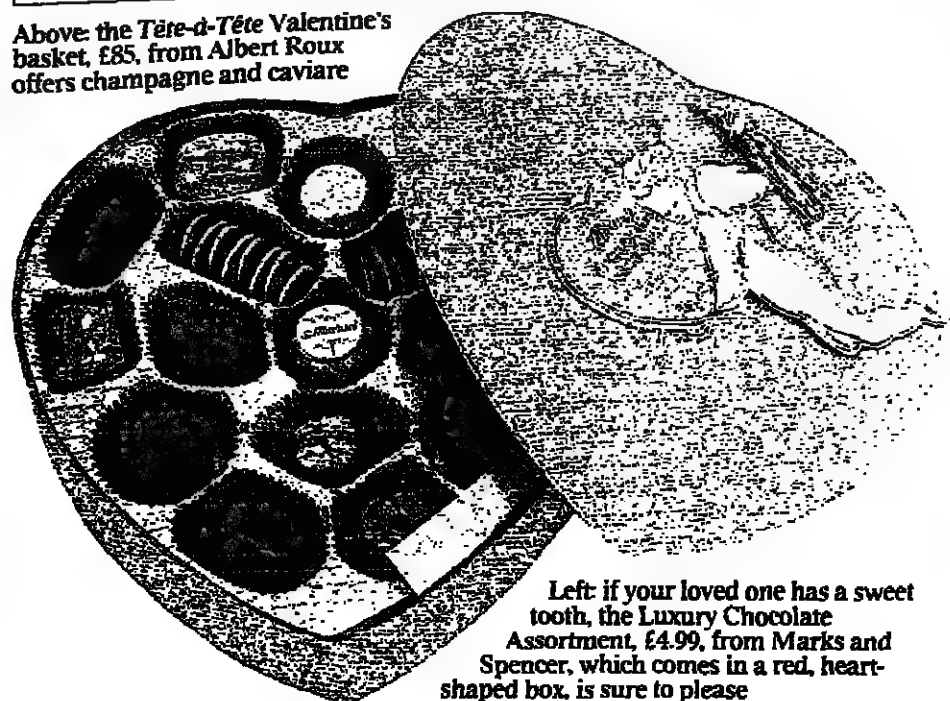
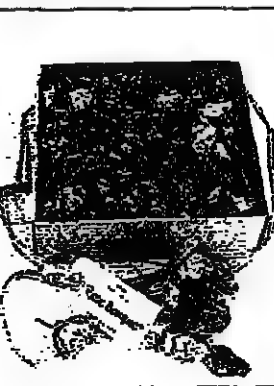
Finally, the ultimate romantic gift to commemorate eternal love: name a star for your loved one. The International Star Registry will do so for £47.50 and send an illuminated certificate, a plan of the constellation, an astronomical chart showing the exact position of the star and an information sheet. Who could resist such a dramatic gesture?

STEPHANIE LEWIS



Above: the Tête-à-Tête Valentine's basket, £85, from Albert Roux offers champagne and caviare

Below: Rose-scented potpourri, £5, from M&amp;S



Left: if your loved one has a sweet tooth, the Luxury Chocolate Assortment, £4.99, from Marks and Spencer, which comes in a red, heart-shaped box, is sure to please



Young love as depicted by Norman Rockwell in 1924. For Valentine's Day this year, rent his studio by the village green in Arlington, Vermont

## A VALENTINE'S DAY TO REMEMBER

IF YOU want to spend Valentine's Day doing something a bit different, investigate what's on offer from these companies:

**Red Letter Days** (0181-343 8822)

On The Day itself, you can have a five-course dinner with champagne, wine, music and orchids on the Orient Express, and a night at the Hampshire Hotel in London (£449 for two); hire a vintage limo, a stretch limo or a New York checker cab for six hours (from £175); take a balloon ride from starting points all over the country (from £129); spend the morning learning to play polo at Ascot (£159); or charter a light aircraft and fly to Le Touquet for the day (price on application). Red Letter Days specialise in the glamorous and wild, from bungee jumping to flying a Russian jet fighter near Moscow.

**Acorn** (01432 830083)

If you want to escape the city, get Acorn's brochure and head for the Welsh Marches. Enjoy a day's falconry (£70); learn to plough a straight furrow with a Shire horse (two hours, £60); spend a day improving your drawing or painting skills (£35); or blow away the cobwebs on a quad bike, a four-wheeled off-road vehicle (half-day trek, £50). Acorn also offers equestrian holidays, sports and craft courses.

**English Country Cottages** (Tel: 01328 851155)

Snuggle up to an open fire at the 17th-century thatched Martin's Cottage in West Sussex (one week £226, self-catering). Nest in The Gate House at Strachur, Argyll, with an open fire, a six-foot bed and Loch Fyne just across the road for aphrodisiac oysters (one week, £200, self-catering). Or jet off to New England and Norman Rockwell's studio by the village green in Arlington, Vermont (two weeks self-catering, £1,115 per person including flights and car hire). Weekend breaks are also available, with a wide choice of cottages.

## Where to buy

- ☐ 3-D Wines: 01205 820745.
- ☐ Aromatique: 0181-813 9091 for stockists.
- ☐ Charbonnel et Walker: 1 The Royal Arcade, Old Bond Street, London W1 (0171-491 0939).
- ☐ The General Trading Company: 144 Sloane Street, London, SW1 (0171-730 0411).
- ☐ The Gluttonous Gardener: 82 Wandsworth Bridge Road, London, SW6 (0171-371 0775).
- ☐ Heritage Conserved: 0691 648749.
- ☐ The House of Albert Roux: 229 Ebury Street, London, SW1 (0171-730 4175).
- ☐ London Zoo: 0171-586 4443
- ☐ Marks and Spencer: branches nationwide.
- ☐ International Star Registry: (Freephone) 0800 212493.

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Robin Williams in *Mrs Doubtfire*: a more hilarious version of Anne Fine's 1987 novel

## Broken hearts, broken homes

Maureen Owen meets Anne Fine, whose novels tell of the experiences of the wounded children of divorce

"You've got my dad now," said one junior-school child to another as they converged on the playground. As a well-known and much sought-after children's author, Anne Fine visits more schools than an inspector, her eyes and ears constantly pricked for the telling phrase. "What struck me about the remark," she says, "is that it was made without irony. Of course, the dad in question may only have been a stepfather. But, as a comment, it had implications."

These implications have fuelled her new book, *Step by Wicked Step*, in which an ill-assorted group of children are taken on a school trip to a creepy old manor house. The five selected are in a "special category". They could be vegetarians, or allergic to wasp stings, or non-swimmers. But what Pixie, Robbo, Claudia, Colin and Ralph really have in common is two emergency telephone numbers: two homes, two families. They belong to that all-too-familiar category, children from broken homes.

After finding a hidden letter relating the experiences of a boy long dead who was driven from the house by a wicked stepfather, the group draw together to compare their own family backgrounds. The case histories involved are about confusion rather than cruelty, uncertainty rather than anything from the welfare files. Unlike the wicked stepfather

**STEP BY WICKED STEP**  
By Anne Fine  
Hamish Hamilton, £9.99

In the story, there are no goodies or baddies among the assorted parents and step-parents, just different aspects of confusion as the modern step-family tries to adjust.

"Once it was death that split the family," Fine says. "Now it's divorce."

At 47, Fine is clearly no Beatrix Potter. Garlanded with awards for children's fiction — from the Carnegie medal to the Smarties prize — she has also won substantial success with the film of *Mrs Doubtfire*, followed by the bestselling video. First published in 1987 as *Madame Doubtfire*, the story deals with the effects of impending divorce on three children. With Robin Williams's drag-act performance as the estranged father, the film is considerably more hilarious than the book, in which the sensible children are alert to everything.

Fine specialises in both the darker and lighter sides of divorce. In her books — she has been writing for 24 years — the children live as happily as possible ever after but have few illusions.

Not surprisingly, some adults are uncomfortable with the novels, finding such themes dismal and gloomy. Many parents prefer to stick with stories by Enid Blyton, Roald Dahl and Richard Crompton. "I love escapism,"

Fine says. "But if I started writing boarding-school stories, I'd only begin wondering why the children had been sent away from home."

Her letters from children sometimes contain unexpected anecdotes. After reading *Goggle Eyes*, about a girl who hates her new stepfather, a boy in a similar situation wrote that he resented becoming responsible for dragging his younger sister away from unsuitable programmes on late-night television.

With the film money from *Doubtfire*, Fine has bought a plot of land adjoining her house overlooking the River Tees. "I loathe shopping so I am not tempted to spend on other things," a graduate of Warwick University, where she read politics and history, she had two daughters by her husband Kit Fine, a philosopher, before divorcing. For the past ten years she has lived with Richard Warren, a botanist, who also has children of his own. She was incensed when a newspaper reported that they were married. "It caused all sorts of problems," she stipulates that from now on in interviews, her personal life should remain her own.

The trouble with a wall of silence is that those on the other side can only speculate. In the case of Fine, you are left supposing that her personal life has given her plenty of writing material.

## Clothed in literary integrity

Polo neck or monkey suit, what do an author's garments say about him?

The Whitbread Book of the Year dinner last week was a black-tie affair, as literary prize-givings usually are — less for the sake of the writers, who often look and feel absurd in evening dress, than for the business guests, for whom these occasions are a form of corporate entertainment. At last year's Booker Prize dinner, the winner, James Kelman, ostentatiously ignored the dress code and spoke to camera with tie loosened and collar unbuttoned. His appearance, I thought, was more eloquent than his anti-Booker speech.

At the Whitbread I found myself talking to two old friends: James Fenton, Professor of Poetry at Oxford and one of the five finalists, and his guest, the American novelist Darryl Pinckney. Both were conspicuous in smart but informal dress, and the Whitbread organisers must have wondered whether Fenton was going to put them in their place *à la* Kelman.

Pat Kavanagh, distinguished literary agent and wife of Julian Barnes, came over. She looked magnificent: dressed to kill (former clients had better beware) in a glittering evening gown. She quickly congratulated Fenton and Pinckney on their gesture, adding: "Julian now won't go to occasions where they tell him what to wear." "Well," said Pinckney, "I'm afraid James just forgot to read the fine print of the invitation."

Long ago, most writers liked to dress formally. Public conviviality has always implied dressing up, and writers have always been social animals: Plato's *Symposium* may be

the first recorded literary dinner party in history, but they were evidently no novelty even then. For many centuries intellectuals found their patrons at court, among the aristocracy or in the Church, so their dress tended to reflect the formality of royal, noble or ecclesiastical attire.

With the growth of the middle-class readership, however, writers could adopt bourgeois fashions, or even set them. Goethe's epistolary novel *Werther* started a craze in the 1770s not only for suicides but also for blue coats and buff waistcoats. Ever since Beau Brummell made modish the monochrome of the modern male, writers have willingly adopted it — even the most dandified or bohemian.

Grey and black, of course, denote gravitas. Many modern writers — Brecht, Beckett, Pinter — have preferred grey military tunics or black polo-neck jerseys to suits or dinner jackets, but theirs are variations on the same monochrome uniform, chosen with care to give precise expression to a strong and serious personality. Clothes are too important in fiction to be neglected in life.

There have always been a few writers, though, who loathed society and disowned the intellectuals who

conformed to its conventions by sartorial self-expression. St Mark had no time for the glimmerati of his day: "Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces..." For them, clothes are functional and of no significance.

These thoughts have been prompted by a novel I have just read: one of those books that I had looked forward to for years but the enjoyment of which I had inexplicably postponed. The eponymous hero of Vladimir Nabokov's *The Invincible* proved to be a distillation of every chess master I have ever known. Lushin's life is so dedicated to chess, the only occupation that gives it meaning, that the rest of the world gradually ceases to exist for him.

It is extraordinary that this, the first great novel he wrote (during his Berlin exile in 1929), was not translated until 1964, and even now has only just been republished here in paperback (Penguin, £6.99), with an afterword by John Updike. In his foreword, Nabokov wryly mentions an interested American publisher in the 1930s who turned out to be the type "who dreams of becoming a male muse to his author, and our brief conjunction ended

abruptly upon his suggesting I replace chess by music and make Lushin a demented violinist."

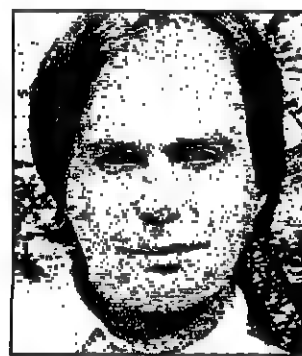
One of the most striking of many recurrent themes running through the novel is the shabby sobriety of the adult Lushin's clothes. He is always in black, stout, dusty and threadbare, his pockets always full of holes, on his head a shapeless black hat or a heavy straw boater. When he plays he wears a velvet waistcoat. A young woman, whose name we are never told, is deeply touched by his seediness, and looks after him when he suffers a nervous breakdown. Once he has recovered, he is obliged by the doctors to renounce chess. After their marriage, she takes him to the tailor to improve his appearance, but he clings to a comfortable old jacket that his wife wants to throw out.

Inside the torn lining lurks a pocket chess set, which Nabokov tells us was his own. It is of a type popular between the wars: a wallet which opens into a chessboard, with celluloid pieces that slip into little slots in each square. On this object hinges the denouement of the novel, which I shall certainly not reveal here.

The point I wish to make about Lushin is that Nabokov uses his clothes and the contents of his pockets as the visible indicator of his invisible mental torment. Though he takes no notice of them, Lushin's clothes are as much part of him as his skin; to remove them is, in a sense, to flay him alive. Without his outer skin, he cannot survive.

Hazel Leslie previews the work of the authors singled out for stardom for their 'fresh talent'

## W. H. Smith whips up six of the best



Straight into paperback and publicity: (from left) Ffiorde, Lawton and Hunter

In the labs at W. H. Smith, the marketing boffins have been struggling once again to isolate that elusive Factor X that distinguishes a useful author from a budding bestseller.

Each year WHS selects six first novelists with "real best-selling potential". Under the banner "Fresh Talent", the happy six are vigorously promoted and published straight into paperback at £4.99. The label sounds literary, but sales are what it is really all about — especially since WHS is pledged to buy at least 10,000 of each title.

On that basis, I back this year's American outsider, Gwen Hunter, whose *Stolen Children* (New English Library), a story of murder and incest among the grand mansions and rotting shanties of the country south of New Orleans, grabs you by the throat with its first sentence and finally releases you, drained and shaking, on page 390. Though this novel bucks some psychological questions, Hunter's writing has that compulsive quality that spells bestsellerdom.

Of the two thrillers, John

Lawton's powerful and funny *Black Out* (Orion) also looks promising, as does its hero, Detective Sergeant Troy, a thinking man's cop, but without the unbearable pretensions of some of his kind. Set in the London Blitz, it sucks you into its own entirely convincing world of bullied Morrisons, dank base-

ment offices and deserted bomb-sites. Troy certainly has potential, and Lawton is said to be working on a follow-up. The other, Colin Bateman's *Divorcing Jack* (HarperCollins), is set in Belfast, where Dan Starkey, drunken and laconically humorous columnist of a Belfast newspaper, finds himself an

innocent man in an incriminating situation when a girl he has spent the night with is murdered. Bateman is a sparky writer, but once Starkey becomes a target, the plot spirals off into a series of coincidences and calamities that I found as confusing as the political situation. At the all-important Aga

saga end of the market, *The Marriage Bed* (Sceptre), by gardening writer Diana Saville, tells the story of Laura — middle-aged, middle-class, and reassuringly reading *Country Life* when we first meet her. Laura's safe world crashes when her husband loses his money, and we are supposed to draw some conclusions about the way she deals with all this. But there is little inner development — the ravishing garden is really the heroine of this novel.

Katie's Ffiorde's *Living Dangerously* (Penguin) has more fun with the genre via her heroine Polly, aspiring potter and waitress in a small Gloucestershire town. Polly is an unwilling recruit to the green wellie ranks, affording some acute and funny observations of the social scene. You would think twice before inviting Ffiorde to dinner.

Norma Curtis's *Living It Up, Living It Down* (HarperCollins) is a sharp look at a group of relentlessly self-interested yuppies struggling towards self-awareness. But I felt Curtis did not care for her characters very much, and neither could I.



Freddie: therapy victim

IN the spring of 1968, I was a teenager leading a happy life in Kent. Unknown to me then, a few miles away a young man of 22 called Freddie was being admitted to Bexley mental hospital. I would still be ignorant of his existence were it not for a rare piece of good fortune in Freddie's otherwise difficult existence — his adoption as a baby by an extraordinary woman, Olivia Frankland, and through her the acquisition of a step-brother, the journalist Mark Frankland, who has chosen to tell Freddie and Olivia's story.

Olivia lost her beloved brother Freddie in a riding accident in Australia; then her second husband, Sam, was killed in the Second World War. Friends suggested a

## Unsuitable boy

**FREDDIE THE WEAVER**  
— The boy who taught to join the world  
By Mark Frankland  
Sinclair-Stevenson, £16.99

baby would heal her loneliness, so she set out to adopt; by the time the papers were complete, she was also married again, to Mark's divorced father. But her beautiful blond baby was a puzzle. By the age of three he was aggressive and flew into rages. He screamed and made noises, but would not talk; was detached and unaffectionate; refused most normal food but developed a habit of eating paper.

So Olivia set off on a round of London's child specialists, and thus began what Frankland calls her "torture" — for Freddie was autistic, at a time when the diagnosis was virtually non-existent.

Even today, Frankland says, the chief British textbook on paediatrics has only one sentence on autism; little surprise, then, that the indefatigable Olivia had to fight all her life through the labyrinths of both mainstream and complementary medicine for recognition and treatment for the son who came to obsess her.

Olivia herself was always giving in to temporary enthu-

siasts for doctors and their latest remedies — she was once persuaded to have all her teeth extracted to cure her sinus trouble — and so Freddie passed from the hands of one orthodoxy to another: from the cosmic theories of central Europeans pioneering brilliant but potentially dangerous postwar child psychoanalysis, to the now condemned brutality of psycho-surgery; from enlightened care by the saintly co-workers of the Camphill movement in Scotland to soul-destroying drug therapy; from forcible incarceration in Bexley to warm-hearted revolutionaries bent on empowering the mentally ill.

Olivia died in 1987, passing guardianship of Freddie to her stepson Mark. Freddie's odyssey has ended, for now, in a small West Country residential home, where Frankland visits him and takes him for walks by the railway. I wonder if Freddie knows he has been written about — if he has seen the book with his picture on the cover, a dark-haired man with a sweet round face and sad eyes, stirring tea at a café table, looking at the camera without expression. I would like to think he tried to eat a page.

SALLY BAKER

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## Derwent May reviews the critics

5.5 Pleasure ratings are awarded to a maximum of five. Column centimetres indicate the length of reviews to date in national broadsheet papers

4.5 Tory hot potato: Francis Urquhart, the murderous Tory Prime Minister so memorably played by Ian Richardson on television, is back in *The Final Cut* (HarperCollins, £14.99), the last part of Michael Dobbs's political trilogy. "His readers, if not the Tory party, have reason to be grateful," said David Robson in *The Sunday Telegraph*. Andrew Billen in *The Observer* pointed out Dobbs's peculiar problem: now he himself is the Conservative deputy chairman, how can he plug the authenticity of his novels when "they star power-drunk Tories"? In *The Sunday Times*, Glenda Jackson, MP (Lab), was more analytical. She thought that "Urquhart is used as a mirror against which we are asked to pass favourable judgment on our present Prime Minister" — but she wondered slyly whether "the comparison really does favour Mr Major". Col cms: 109

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## BOOKS

15

## NEW IN PAPERBACK

Indian camp: from *500 Nations* (Hutchinson, £35)

## ■ THE BINGO PALACE

By Louise Erdrich

Flamingo, £5.99

In the fourth novel of her powerful quartet, Louise Erdrich returns to the fertile fictive territory that she has made her own — a Chippewa Native American reservation in North Dakota.

Having obeyed his grandmother's summons to return to the tribe at a time of crisis, a directionless but charismatic young Indian falls passionately in love with a girl he cannot have because she is betrothed to another. His rival is not only the most powerful man on the reservation, but also his uncle, half-brother and boss.

However, this is merely the central strand of a complex plot which explores and brilliantly illuminates the proud, fatalistic soul of a dispossessed people and the potency of ancient beliefs. Different voices take up the story as it leaps lightly from past to present, from the supernatural to the mundane, from a mystic realm of visions, trances and grass dances to the harsh modern world of pick-up trucks, casinos and racism.

Erdrich's prose has a compelling, poetic rhythm which effortlessly carries you wherever she wants you to go. Do not be put off, initially, by the tangled array of characters and references to other books, because you will quickly be drawn into their rich, elemental world.



TRAVELS IN A THIN COUNTRY

By Sara Wheeler

Abacus, £6.99

Inspired by a meeting with a Chilean in a swimming pool, Sara Wheeler sets off for Latin America armed only with two carpenter's and a burning curiosity. In six months she travels the 2,600-mile length of Chile, from its glacial deserts to its Antarctic wastes. Her portraits of people met on the way, be they political prisoners in Santiago or descendants of pirates in Juan Fernandez, are at once attractive and interactive. Despite a somewhat self-satisfied tone, Wheeler captures the drama of this varied land.

## ■ THE SANDBEETLE

By Zia Rohan

Flamingo, £5.99

Leo Beck is a Jewish boy in 1930s Berlin. This novel takes him as a refugee to an eccentric couple in England: to Oxford as a medical student, to Australia as a deported "enemy alien", and back to England again. Obsessed since childhood with the camouflage technique of the chameleon, he finds a similar resourcefulness in the sandbeetle of the Australian deserts. Rohan portrays Leo's own resourceful adaptations with humour, pity and affection.

## ■ HENRY PURCELL: Glory of His Age

By Margaret Campbell

Oxford University Press, £8.99

Admitting in her preface that very little is known about Purcell's private life, Campbell compensates superbly by setting the composer vividly in his social and artistic context. Born into a family of "musicians to His Majesty", Purcell was a choirboy in the Chapel Royal at the time of the Great Fire and remained court musician to successive eccentric monarchs, who often forgot to pay him. But his contemporaries recognised his genius and by the time he died, aged 37 (his 300th anniversary falls later this year), he was widely revered as "a very great Master of Music". This scholarly work paints a fascinating portrait of Purcell's world and includes a controversial re-reading of his opera *Dido and Aeneas*.

Contributors: Nicki Household, Mary Sullivan, Rachel Campbell-Johnston

Heather Neill finds a folk tale at the heart of Isaac Singer's posthumous novel

## A chuckle at God's comedy

GOD, thinks Aaron Greidinger, is a novelist. The narrator and chief character of Isaac Bashevis Singer's posthumously published novel, *Meshegah*, is himself a writer, publishing stories serially in a New York Yiddish newspaper, the *Jewish Daily Forward*, and dispensing agony-uncle advice through its columns and on the radio. He imagines the Almighty on high, laughing at his own comedy acted out by human players. Greidinger/Singer has something of the same amused detachment: even at the most serious moments a smile flickers in the prose.

Set mainly in New York in 1952, *Meshegah*, the Yiddish for crazy, insane) focuses on survivors of the Holocaust whose interdependence creates "a small shetle", the chief preoccupation of which is spreading gossip. One day,

the large-than-life Max Aberdam bursts into Greidinger's office. Sixty-seven years old, a Warsaw hustler, "glutton, gizzer, womaniser", his survival is so unexpected it is as if he has returned from the dead. He introduces the 47-year-old Greidinger to his young mistress, Miriam, and soon she is equally passionately involved with both men. The arrangement is amicable and survives the melodramas which ensue. For Greidinger and his closest

## ■ MESHEGAH

By Isaac Bashevis Singer

Translated by the author and Nili Wachtel

Hamish Hamilton, £15.99

est friends, a visit to the newly-established state of Israel provides both a sense of homecoming and a jolt: Yiddish, the language of the European oppressed, is frowned upon and Greidinger, despite his celebrity, faces criticism. It is here that Miriam's darkest secret, her role in the death camp of Shushof, is revealed. Greidinger's initial reaction is physical — he vomits — but he nevertheless pities her.

There is a sense throughout of searching for a new moral code, a way to take up life again after the unthinkable events in Nazi-dominated Europe. Greidinger, too, is casting about for fulfilment in his professional life. If Greidinger is not precise-

ly Singer, there are deliberate parallels. *Meshegah* was itself, according to Singer's custom, serialised in the *Forward*, between 1981 and 1983. Greidinger is a Polish Jew, the same age as Singer was in 1952 and the son of a rabbi. There is even reference to two Singer characters as if they were Greidinger creations.

One of the preoccupations of the book is the novelist's role (Greidinger favours "action, suspense, imagery", the style of Homer and the Bible rather than of Proust, Joyce or Kafka), especially that of the Jewish novelist who chooses to write in Yiddish and refuses to sentimentalise his characters, however much they have suffered, even if such honesty attracts charges of fuelling anti-Semitism.

This is a sad, wise, funny, sophisticated book, with the directness of a folk tale.



Doughty: flair for set pieces

## Making a drama of office drudgery

## ■ CRAZY PAVING

By Louise Doughty

Touchstone, £9.99

PLAYWRIGHT, theatre critic, journalist, Louise Doughty is a person of wide interests and considerable accomplishments, but does she have a fictional voice?

Certainly, she has a big subject — the ordinariness of people's working lives — and she should be applauded for setting much of her debut novel in the closed world of a London surveyor's office. Few novelists write successfully about work, but as Doughty shows, office life, with its labyrinthine network of rules, its compromises and petty hierarchies, is a place which is at once real and surreal.

*Crazy Paving* is about three young women — Annette, Joan and Helly — and their attempt to find a way out of the maze of bureaucratic confusion into which they have wandered so unwittingly. Although Annette feels that she and her colleagues are "pathetic", they are, in fact, perfectly likeable, and we read with recognition of their falling in and out of love, their troubled pasts and their diminished aspirations. Little happens to them that is memorable; yet at the end, after a plot to expose their boss as a treacherous swindler brings them together, one feels that through their tenderness to one another they have found dignity and a kind of nobility.

There is much to enjoy here, but Doughty's strengths as a playwright are, paradoxically, her weaknesses as a novelist. She has a flair for set pieces, for the epiphanic moment, yet she does not create a convincingly complete fictional world. Her dialogue is sharp and driven, yet her prose is sluggish and becalmed, stylistically conventional. Similarly, as a narrator, she is simply too prescriptive. A woman, for instance, is introduced who resembles a duck-billed platypus — but we are just told this. Doughty makes no attempt to describe how such a person would look, move or talk, leaving us to conclude that such a task, requiring a piercing comic eye and radiantly exact prose, is beyond her.

This would be permissible in the theatre, where one could rely on an actor to animate the woman's oddity; but the novelist, bereft of such supporting structures, has only language with which to convince. And too often, alas, Doughty fails.

JASON COWLEY

## Big bucks in the market

## ■ FREE TO TRADE

By Michael Ridpath

Heinemann, £10

THE concept of the "blockbuster, million-earning best-seller" has become so universally accepted that many people forget that dozens of well-crafted works of popular fiction are published each year, while many famous names write rubbish.

Publishers are constantly on the lookout for the next money-spinner and are aware that the public can be conned by big advances. Nothing succeeds like success: publicise a mega-fee and the tabloid press and television automatically promote your man to mega-stardom, often before a word of his opus has been published.

This was certainly the case for Michael Ridpath, whose personal story might have been plotted with the tabloid press in mind: "tragic yuppies makes bomb out of book". Ridpath's yarn about dirty dealing in the City was touted by his agents as the best first novel she had ever read. It made headlines when Heinemann signed the publishing deal not just because of the hefty advance (reportedly more than £250,000) but because the tragedy of his wife's death in childbirth automatically tugged at tabloid readers' heartstrings.

The fact is, however, that Ridpath's book really is rather good. This is *Bonfire of the Vanities* with attitude. It starts smart and gets slicker. The



Ridpath: smart and slick

opening is guaranteed to inspire immediate enthusiasm: "I had lost half a million dollars in slightly less than half an hour and the coffee machine didn't work. This was turning into a bad day." Even though Ridpath does not quite manage to keep up this Chandleresque patter, his writing is snappy enough to keep the pages turning. His language is spartan, economical, written in the sort of sentences one might expect on the telephone from a bond dealer in a hurry. His characters are neatly drawn — unusual for a first timer, and in stark contrast to the cardboard cutouts in the operas of some established million-earning scribblers.

I found Rob, every office's patent mix of Romeo and Lothario, particularly convincing, but also appreciated the soft-spoken, calculating character of Hamilton, the hero's mentor on the markets, and the insufferable American, "Cash" Callaghan. Joe Finlay, the maverick dealer with a penchant for stubbing cigarettes out on cab driver's necks, is a creditably chilling study in abstract violence.

Ridpath's forte is that his inside experience makes the computerised violence done daily on the screens of bond-market dealers both as accessible and as adrenalin-charging as the physical stuff. The only real question mark hanging over this book is whether he has another subject in him: can he do it again?

PETER MILLAR



PUBLISHED to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Jamaican star's birth, *Bob Marley: Songs of Freedom* (Bloomsbury, £25) is a handsome celebration of the performer who brought reggae into the mainstream of rock. Marley's potent blend of rhythm, resistance and Rastafarian religion — politics you could dance to, music you could smoke — spoke equally to old hippies and young punks, to South African township rebels and (if Sir Teddy Taylor is anything to go by) British Tory parliamentarians.

Remarkably, that crossover success, probably unmatched by any black performer before or since, was achieved without apparent compromise. In his

## Rastaman vibrations

native Jamaica, Marley attained a stature that enabled him to transcend the country's devastating political violence, though not before he had survived an assassination attempt in 1976. At a peace concert in April 1978 he brought together on stage the country's rival party leaders, Michael Manley and Edward Seaga (above). Internationally, his reputation as

a focus of black aspirations has grown since his death from cancer in 1981.

Destined to grace radical coffee tables everywhere, this collaboration between rock journalist Chris Salewicz and Adrian Boot, who for many years was Marley's semi-official photographer, demonstrates Marley's enduring appeal but makes no serious attempt to account for it. The text, thanks perhaps to the influence of the star's widow, Rita Marley, as "Executive Editor" veers between the hagiographical and the idolatrous. But the pictures are fabulous, and the music will do the rest.

IAN BRUNSKILL

## Luton's own gumshoe

JOE Sixsmith is a black private eye operating in Luton. I repeat, Luton. He has a nagging aunt trying to marry him off, an unpleasant cat and the usual portmanteau of hang-ups that no detective can do without.

This does not seem promising. Indeed it is almost perverse of Reginald Hill to choose such apparently bland terrain, so very far from the comfortable Yorkshire of his much loved and lauded novels featuring the police partnership Pascoe and Dalziel. Lesser crime writers would have made an embarrassing hash of it. Hill carries it off.

Sixsmith, scuffling away from choir practice, comes across a cardboard box occupied by the body of an unknown youth. His co-finder, a formidable woman with a

## Marcel Berlins walks the mean, or at least the high, streets

## ■ BORN GUILTY

By Reginald Hill

HarperCollins, £14.99

questionable past, demands that he discovers the deceased's identity. He is hired to find out whether or not a flamboyant punk girl's granddad was a Ukrainian war criminal; and a dynamic left lawyerette wants him to look into the busy extramural life of a glamorous schoolteacher married to the local chief inspector. Busy place, Luton. Our hero is an amiable slob.

his successes coming as much from luck and hanging around his local, the Gilt (short for Gary Giltner), as from brilliant detection. His various investigations meander along entertainingly, without too many fireworks but never losing their grip.

For at least two decades Hill has been one of Britain's most consistently excellent crime novelists, denied greater public acclaim only because, inexplicably, his books have not been translated to television. He pays attention to the old-fashioned virtues: meticulous plotting, authentic characterisation and realistic dialogue. He has, too, a wonderful feel for the absurd, the comic and the off-beat. *Born Guilty*, the second Sixsmith book, shows that class will out, even in Luton.

## Old man befriends girl student — where's the harm?

PENELOPE Evans's first novel threatens to do for the lodging houses of north London what *Psycho* did for motels. She also manages to deal a serious blow to the cause of lonely pensioners waiting at home in the hopes the neighbours will drop in.

Harry Mann has been a sitting tenant for nearly 50 years in the top flat of a house in Holloway. Downstairs are the landlady, Ethel Duck, and her invalid husband. Into the flat in between moves Amanda Tyson, a tongue-tied student, newly arrived from Edinburgh.

## Psycho with a pension

## ■ THE LAST GIRL

By Penelope Evans

Black Swan, £5.99

late from bowls of fruit to clock radios. She tries to tiptoe in and out, but he can hear her every move.

These are overtures of friendship akin to Hitler's move on Poland. Harry knows what his Mandy needs: to be his alone. And he will use any means.

Amanda is a perfect victim. Her parents live in Hong Kong. She had some kind of

breakdown earlier in her university career and now has an eating disorder. London is her chance to start again, make some friends. Too bad she moved in at the Ducks'. Too bad she is well brought up and sympathetic, a sucker for an elderly neighbour abandoned long ago by his wife and daughter and like her, alone in the world.

This book is a skillful exercise in suspense, but its feet never leave the ground. The market stalls and dingy emporia of Holloway Road are always round the corner. Amanda's road to hell is paved with Angel Delight and fig rolls. Even the chilling denouement is unleashed by an over-indulgence in novelty liqueurs. Sad, funny and frightening, *The Last Girl* is a very clever first novel.

ROSE WILD

## TIMES BOOKS

## THURSDAY

A lost prime minister and a potential one: John Gigg on Dilke. Ian McIntyre on Blair. Plus: Shakespeare's youth reassessed, and Anne McElroy on the real Volga boatmen

## "Clever, humorous and utterly immoral"

John Coleman on Tim Parks, Sunday Times

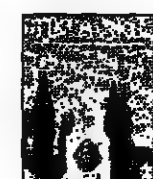


## TIM PARKS

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## PROPERTY

17

# When home is a concrete tank

A pair of housing pioneers are going underground — not just because they want an unusual home but also for sound ecological reasons. Could this be the house of the future?

A small advert, "Concrete reservoir for sale", in a local newspaper six years ago set Jonathan Rodney-Jones and Shannon Ridd on a self-build trail that will end when they finally move into one of the most unusual houses in Britain.

The pair are going underground — into a huge concrete water tank buried beneath a steep bank in a Devon lane. Built in 1904, the tank supplied water to the 8,000 people of Braunton, near Barnstaple, until the late 1940s. However, it will be several more years before they are able to occupy their subterranean home because they are doing nearly all the work themselves.

The couple, known as "the moles" in Braunton, where they are living with Mr Rodney-Jones's parents, are taking so long over their giant task because they have been unable to get a mortgage on the property. They have had to earn the estimated £70,000 needed for the conversion from the sculpture and mosaics company they run.

It took them two years to prepare their case for planning permission, which was granted in August 1992.

Before that, they spent two years designing such practicalities as water and power supply, and sanitation. The extended time scale has not been a huge problem for the pair. Mr Rodney-Jones says: "We paid £5,000 for the tank — plus two separate one-third-acre plots — and because we desperately needed a timber store and extra workshop space for our company, we considered the money well spent, even if we failed to get planning permission for a house."

"From the outset, we had to have great faith in the project. It was only after contracts were exchanged that we were able to gain entry. The sale was by tender, sight unseen, because the tank was not insured for casual callers."

The first time the pair climbed down a rusting iron ladder to



The "moles" emerge from their underground home

inspect the inside of their purchase they expected to descend into fathoms of mud and silt. Instead, they found a 31ft by 62ft sweet-smelling vault, 12ft high. The massive concrete roof, and the earth above it, was supported by eight brick pillars.

"We knew immediately that it would make a marvellous home," Mr Rodney-Jones says. "All our ideas of using it as a workshop or a woodstore disappeared."

In the past two years, the two have removed tonnes of earth that covered the 4ft-thick concrete roof, and used a special diamond-core drill to cut three large square holes. These will support three glass pyramids, which will be the main source of light and heat for the property and, from the hillside above, the only clue to their troglodyte existence.

They have also removed layers of earth from part of one side of the tank nearest the road and cut a hole, 8ft by 4ft, to form the main entrance. The slab of concrete they removed weighed an estimated six tonnes. Outside this breach in the side of the main structure they are

building an irregularly shaped dark ante-room through which visitors will enter the house. "This will contrast totally with the regularity of the main chamber beyond," Mr Rodney-Jones says. "The idea is to make it a sort of dark mock-gothic vaulted space reminiscent of a comic opera set."

As visitors enter the main chamber, they will undergo a strange experience. The deliberate "underground" feel of the dark vestibule will disappear immediately as they see light pouring in from the roof, and casting a myriad of reflections on the mosaic floor in the central dining and meeting area.

Ms Ridd says: "We plan to have a display and stage area in the middle of this space, where we can entertain clients and show them some of our sculptures."

Three bedrooms, two bathrooms and the kitchen will radiate off the main chamber: glazed partition-style walls will allow natural light to spread from the central area.

"We also plan to paint some backcloths — perhaps of Devon countryside or maybe typical scenes you might see through a suburban window — to give a trompe-l'oeil effect because we shall have no exterior view from the building," she says.

The two do not see this lack of scenery as a disadvantage, although purpose-built earth-sheltered buildings are usually sited into hillsides, with views from glazed fronts. To compensate, they plan to install a submarine periscope at the top of the vertical steel ladder leading to the original access hatch.

The couple seem to have a penchant for disused military equipment. Building materials are transported to the site on a four-wheeled Bedford military truck bought for £1,400 at the sale of redundant military hardware where they bought the periscope.

Graphic: Tony Barrett

Original roof of reservoir is of concrete supported by brick vaults

Side skylights are only part placed to avoid excessive heat build-up

Separate small water tank adds as reservoir for turbine supplying 24 volt electricity

Air conditioning worked by rise and fall of water in tank extracting stale air through system of valves

Reservoir's original ball valve left as decorative feature

Hole for main entrance made with specialist diamond-tipped drill

Entrance hall

Bedroom 1

Bedroom 2

Bathroom

Main living area

Stained glass screen (bedroom 3 behind)

3 foot high platform

3 Cloak room

Dark room

Kitchen

Staircase

Original roof vent

Fire escape through old manhole

Finished roof covered with 18" of soil topped with grass

Damp proof membrane

Expanded polystyrene insulation

Damp proof membrane laid on to concrete roof

Floor construction

Screed

Damp proof membrane

Expanded polystyrene insulation

Original concrete reservoir walls are 3 feet thick at base

Ridge of entrance hall roof is stained glass

Staircase

Bedroom 3

Bedroom 4

Bedroom 5

Bedroom 6

Bedroom 7

Bedroom 8

Bedroom 9

Bedroom 10

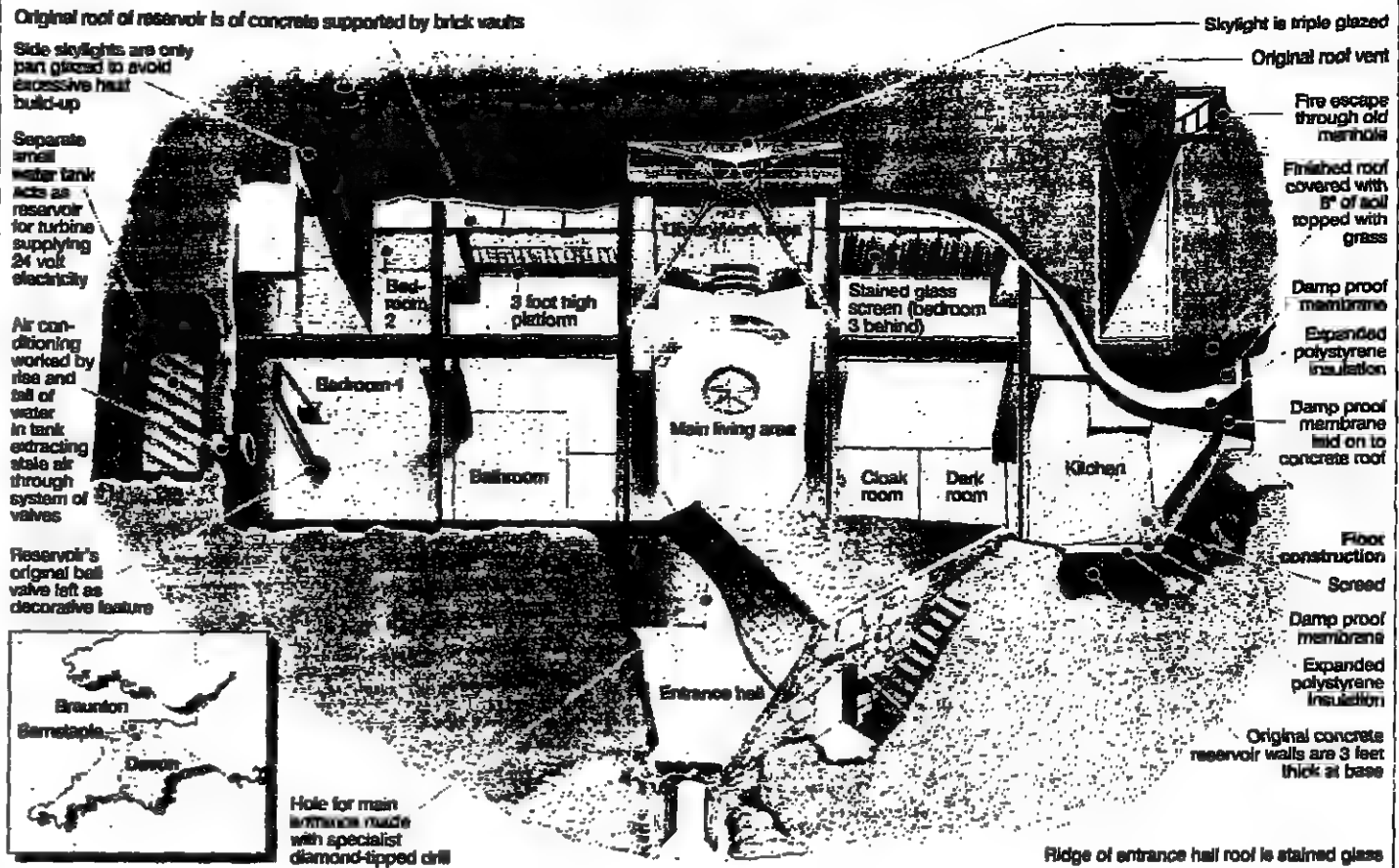
Bedroom 11

Bedroom 12

Bedroom 13

Bedroom 14

## LIFE IN THE TANK



Mr Rodney-Jones says: "When all the work is complete, the building will be as invisible from the lane as it was before. But it would be nice to buy an old army tank to stand guard at the front, with its barrel protruding through the hedge that borders the lane. We could mount the house name — The Tank — on the barrel."

Beneath the wit and the exuberance that characterises the venture and the joy of seeing their project coming to fruition, Mr Rodney-Jones and Ms Ridd are trying to make a number of serious points.

Their belief in the benefits of living underground is genuine. The couple are enthusiastic members of the British Earth Sheltering Association, a body devoted to promoting living underground — something that is quite commonplace in America, in parts of Spain and in China.

"We expect virtually no heating bills," Mr Rodney-Jones says. "The surrounding earth and the inner linings to all the walls should provide ample storage for the solar gain we achieve through the pyramids during the day, and the light coming in should create interesting

effects in the main central living area. We predict that this will cut our lighting bills by a third.

"Earth sheltering also provides greater security, very little maintenance and, in our case, a building that we think will last a good 500 years. There are fewer than a dozen other earth sheltered homes in this country and we like to think that we are pioneers."

"In 100 years' time, or less, I believe that large numbers of people will be living in earth sheltered homes in Britain."

"Building this way ties in with the new conservationist methods. Society is going to have to look at energy usage, and earth dwellings save space in a crowded country."

"The concept also accords with the thinking of an increasing number of people who are tired of living in what I call shoe boxes."

"This in turn means that far more agricultural land is going to have to be released for housing. To keep that land green, there is really only one way of building — underground."

CLIVE FEWINS

EARTH sheltered housing has many advantages, according to the British Earth Sheltering Association. Underground homes, it says:

- have better energy-saving properties than most other forms of housing;
- have a low visual impact;
- require little structural maintenance;
- are free from most forms of intrusive noise;
- save space, and are thus environmentally friendly;
- have a low fire risk and thus low insurance premiums;
- provide greater security than conventional homes;
- are resistant to draughts;
- make use of steep slope sites on which it is often impossible to build a conventional house;
- unlike most homes, they do not contribute to global warming — they need little heating and therefore produce virtually no CO<sub>2</sub>.

Peter Carpenter, the secretary of the British Earth Sheltering Association, who lives in an underground home near Monmouth, Gwent, says: "There are very few disadvantages. One is that because there are so few earth sheltered homes in the UK, it is usually hard — although not impossible — to get planning permission. Some people find it difficult to cope psychologically in an earth sheltered dwelling — but this usually applies only to deep structures."

"When a lot of excavation is needed, building costs can be higher than for conventional homes — although savings can often be made in other ways."

● A free leaflet on earth sheltered housing can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the British Earth Sheltering Association, Caer Llan Bern House, Lydart, Monmouth, Gwent NP5 4J.

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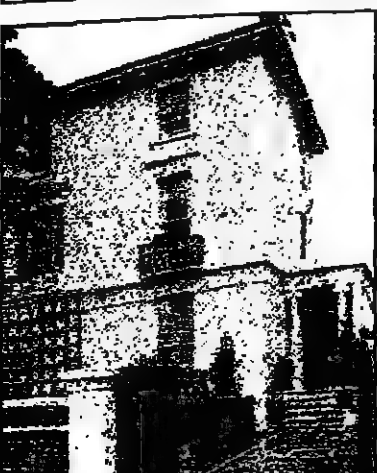
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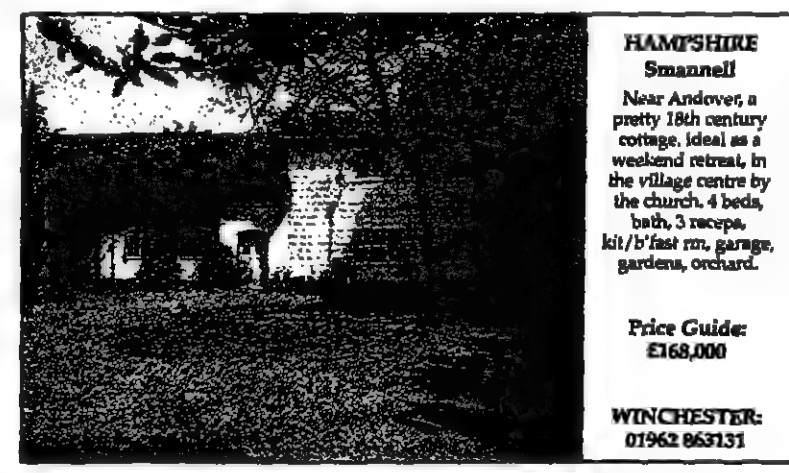
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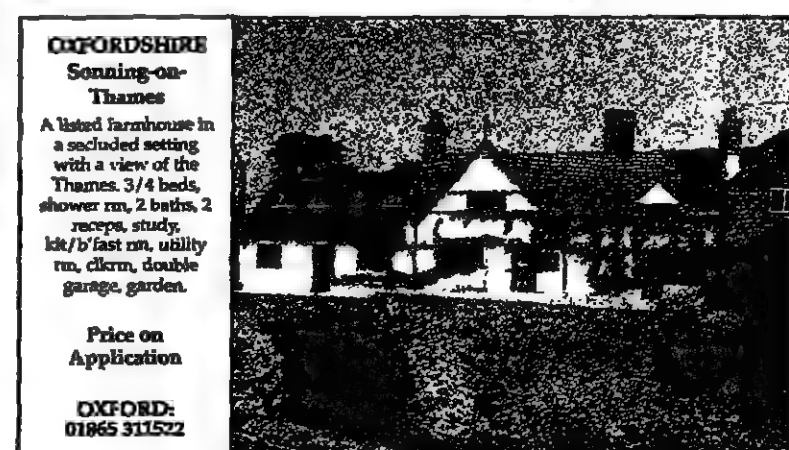
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Smannell

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Price Guide: £169,000

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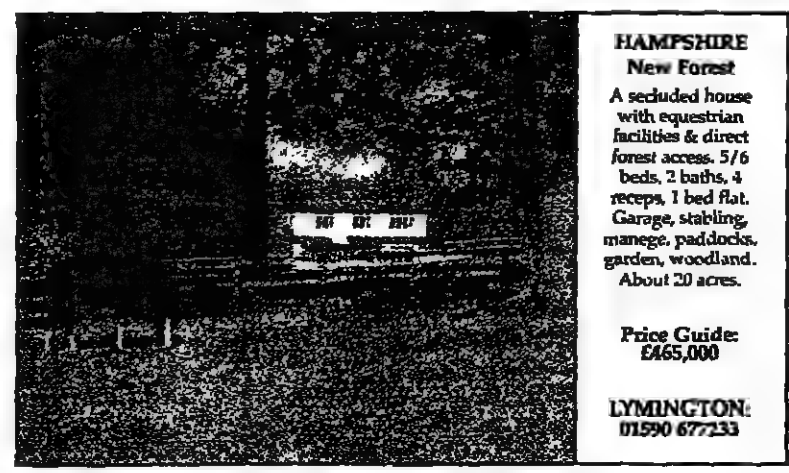
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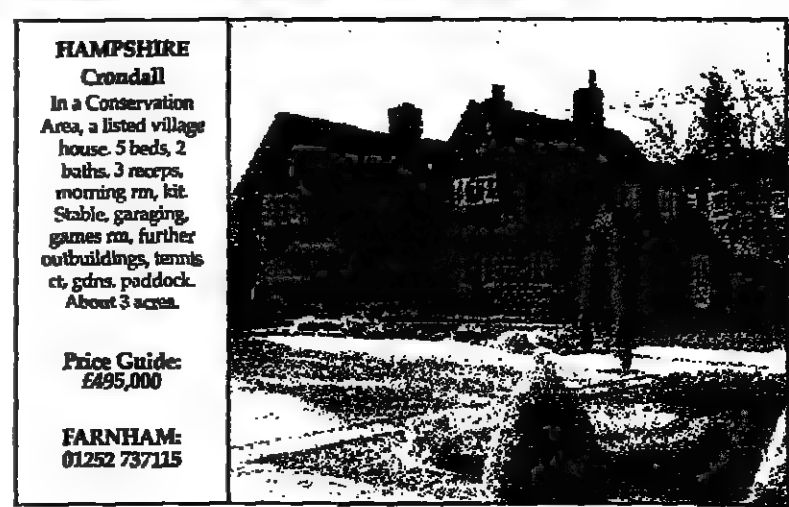
### HAMPSHIRE

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A secluded house with equestrian facilities & direct forest access. 5/6 beds, 2 baths, 4 recep, 1 bed flat. Garage, stabling, manège, paddocks, garden, woodland. About 20 acres.

Price Guide: £465,000

LYMINGTON: 01590 677233



### HAMPSHIRE

Crandall

In a Conservation Area, a listed village house. 5 beds, 2 baths, 3 recep, morning rm, kit. Stable, garaging, games rm, further outbuildings, tennis ct, ponds, paddock. About 3 acres.

Price Guide: £495,000

FARNHAM: 01252 737115







If the day should ever dawn when I sit down to write my classic Victorian novel, a saga of bitter farming struggles against the elements, a tale where the passionate heavings in the barn are counterpointed by the groans of men ruined by the land, I shall not make the same mistake as some eminent authors who have gone before me.

The problem is that what I am looking for in a great agricultural novel is not quite the same as what the average reader seeks. Most will be looking for strong narrative, atmosphere, characters with whom they can identify, a thread of steamy romance which they can share through all its ups and downs. I am looking for none of these things: I am looking for instructions.

Take Thomas Hardy, for example. The way we farm here, with carthorses and pitchforks, is not all that far removed from the methods of farming that were being used in 1886 when *The Mayor of Casterbridge* was published. In fact, I watched the television version of that famous novel over Christmas

## Taking a leaf out of Hardy's books



FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

to maturity. I uncorked the stack last week.

Ah, the bouquet: the scents of summer that are recreated the instant the thatch is removed! Thatch, notice. No plastic sheets which might have kept the outside drier, but would have ruined the hay by allowing it to

sweat. No, my thatch has lasted a winter and a half through some of the wettest weather we have ever experienced, and I can put my hand on my heart and declare the hay to be every bit as

good, if not better, than the day that we built the stack 18 months ago.

While standing atop the stack, forking away the straw so that I could plunge the hay knife into it and start to cut a slice, I wondered whether I was going about this the right way. There have been end-

less words written on the building of haystacks, but hardly anything has been written about taking them down again.

Then I remembered that Hardy's Michael Henchard, the eventual Mayor of Casterbridge, started his working career cutting hay. It says so at the beginning of chapter one: "Any trade doing here?" he asked phlegmatically. "Anything in the hay-trussing line?" So it was not only a skill: it was a profession in its own right. I searched the chapter for more details.

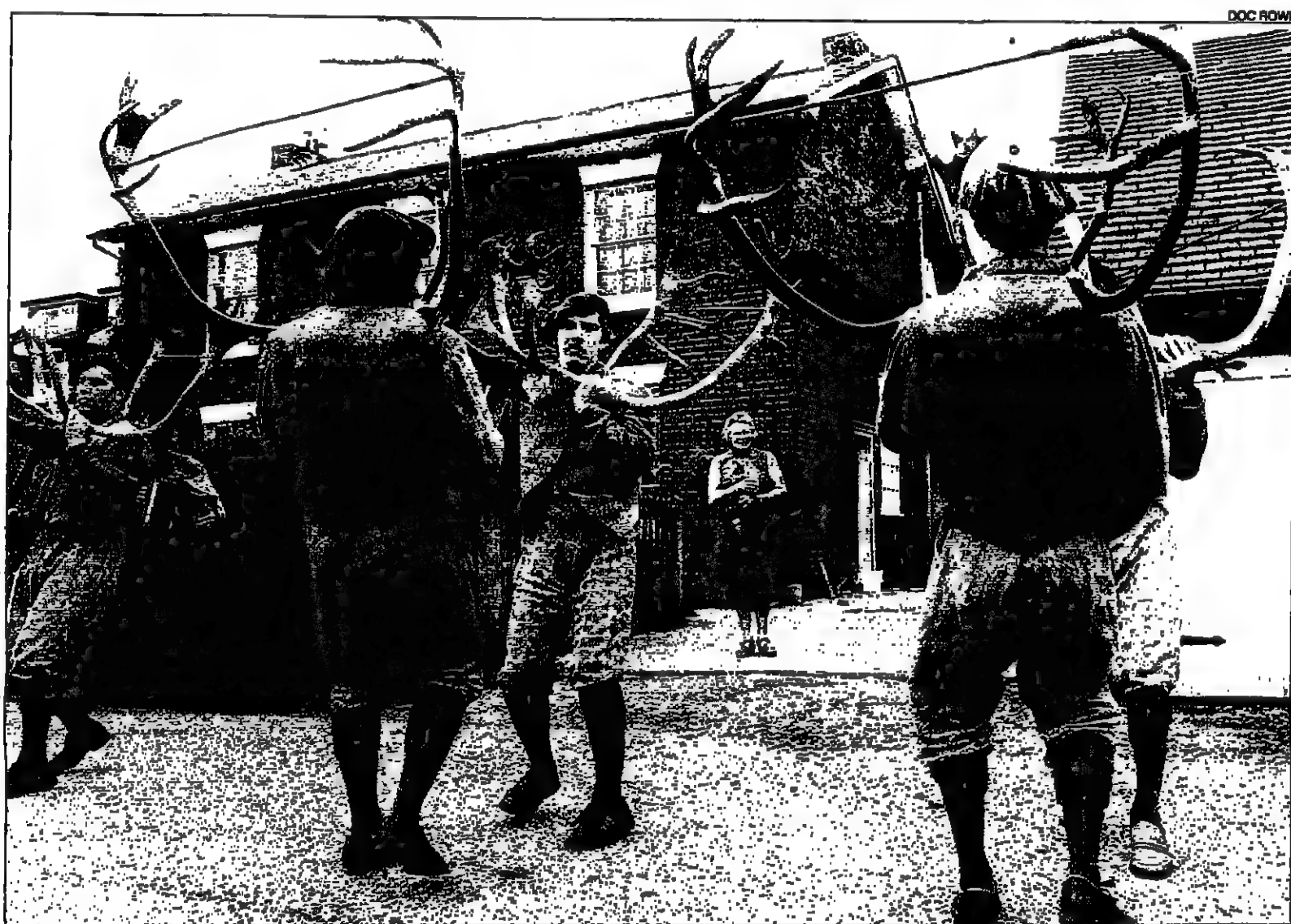
The method I employ is one of simply cutting the hay and flinging it on to the cart for the horse to pull to the stockyard. Not particularly skilled work: but could it be that there is more to it? At his back he carried by a loop strap a rush basket, from which protruded at one end the crutch of a hayknife, a wimble for haybonds also being visible from the aperture. These are good clues. I have

a hay-knife and, strangely enough, a wimble too. It is a device rather like a small brace and bit, but with a hook at one end. It is for making rups out of straw: one man twists while another feeds long straw into the growing rope. It is another of those jobs to which there is far more knack than description.

So, it would appear, I have all the tools I need to be able to call myself a hay-trusser, except the skill. This is where Hardy is a serious leadover. We have page after page crammed with the sale of his wife and the passionate pursuit of Mrs. Farfrae, but at no stage does he get out his wimble and perform the vital task of trussing some hay.

I have even consulted tomes written before Hardy, and although one warns not to cut too large a slice of hay from the stack at any one time "for fear of exposing it to the elements", not one of these books reveals the secrets of the trusser's art. What did they do? What was it about the job that drove them to get plastered on rum and sell their wives? Someone must know.

## Cherished traditions may be far less ancient than we think



The horns in the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance date from the 11th century, Doc Rowe says. But the earliest record of the dance he has found is in 1686

## Rhubarb and customs?

Britain is awash with customs. Tomorrow, for example, sees cradle rocking — when the male child born closest to last Christmas is rocked throughout the service at St Mary of the Purification, Blidworth, near Mansfield in Nottinghamshire — and the afternoon "clowns' service" when red-nosed folk in enormous shoes commemorate the death of the clown Grimaldi at Holy Trinity, Delston, in the East End of London.

Ancient and not-so-ancient ceremonies pack the calendar. White-robed figures parade around Stonehenge, hobbyhorses gallop around the West Country, and everywhere can be heard the tinkling of Morris dancers' bells.

The British Tourist Authority has a 60-page list of customs still celebrated: some folk events are described as being ancient or of pagan origin; the origins of others are referred to only vaguely.

For instance, on Milk-a-Punch Sunday in the Channel Island of Alderney, "in days gone by" the first Sabbath in May meant you could milk anyone's cow and take their eggs. And Erwall Well Dressing, the ceremony in Derbyshire in which flowers are put around the well, "dates back several centuries".

We've grown accustomed to these customs. But are they any more traditional than a motorbike rally in Birmingham or a sponsored bed-pushing competition in Basildon? According to D.R. ("Doc") Rowe, a committee member of both the Folklore Society and the Oral History Society, and a dedicated observer of customs, tourist boards often misrepresent the age of the customs.



Britannia Coconut dancers in Bacup, Lancashire

usually denuded of their leaves, are of unquestioned antiquity, and were the central focus for May Day festivities. But the earliest reference to the plaiting of ribbons is on November 28, 1836, when the supporting cast in the Victoria Theatre in the West End needed to be given something to do.

Doc Rowe's flat, in unruled Holborn, London, bulges with his photographs, tapes and videos of the real folk behind the folklore. "There are people who think that if I come along and take photographs," he laughs, "it makes the event traditional. I've been to about 160 traditional events, and for 32 years I have been recording oral testimony. I have listened to people in their nineties. A lot of their family testimony, via parents and grandparents, can go back to the 1750s."

It was the intensity of the community's involvement in the Padstow Hobby Horse on May 1 which started him off 32 years ago, he recalls. "The earliest description of a performance in Padstow was around 1846." Doc Rowe maintains that a few rural customs can be traced back nearly 1,000 years. "We have disapproving references to 'Mumblings' and 'Mortyssing' in the 8th century, although the references do not say what participants did

or what costume, if any, there was," he says.

In other words, the appearance of any given "old" custom may well have changed radically over the years. This is certainly the case in the annual "Hunting of the Earl of Rone", held on May 29. The ceremony, in which a make-believe aristocrat is paraded on a donkey and chucked into the waves, fell into abeyance.

"1837 was the last time it was noted," says Doc Rowe, who last year went to Combe Martin, Devon, for the ceremony. "Then in 1974 a reconstruction, rather than a revival, took place." Today the procession observes a brief silence as it passes the spot where in the 1830s a reveller named Lovering, who was watching the procession, fell off a wall and died: this was probably the excuse for the local Baptist minister to have the ear-hunting ritual banned.

Another custom which has been more recently revived is the Straw Bear of Whitlesey, in Cambridgeshire. The tradition, in which a resident walks the streets wearing a costume of straw to celebrate the return to work on the land on the first Saturday in January, died out early this century but was revived about 15 years ago.

There is still more confusion about the origins of a Staffordshire rite in which six men leap about carrying enormous antlers. Doc Rowe, who has been attending the rite for 21 years, says: "You can actually carbon date the horns of the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance back to the 11th century." But the earliest record of the dance that Doc Rowe has been able to trace is in 1686.

Nineteenth-century scholars imposed what Doc Rowe feels

is a rigid interpretation of whatever they saw. Folklore became folk law. "The folklorists came along in the 1890s and often gathered information secondhand — from the vicar's wife, for example, instead of peering over hedges and talking to locals."

Some outsiders have the nerve to lecture the folk who carry out the customs: "I've met folk enthusiasts who say they're doing it wrong. New Age 'pagans' at these events frequently search for a link with druids, earth mothers and water spirits — for which there is no evidence."

What matters to Doc, however, is that the ritual happens. He believes folklore should be fun: "A celebration of ourselves, either as a community or as individuals, is why people join in."

"I've seen events at which people who are enjoying themselves suddenly do something spontaneous, like stick greenery in their hat. I go back the next year, and another person will do it. Before long, they will call it 'traditional'. The exciting thing is that I was there at its inception."

Jonathan Sale

### Traditional highlights

- February 28: Shrove Tuesday Football, Ashbourne, Derbyshire. Mass rugby with goals positioned miles apart.
- April 15: Britannia Coconut Dancers dance through Bacup, Lancashire.
- May 1: Arthur's Seat Service, Edinburgh. Citizens climb the mound to watch sunrise.
- May 1 to 3: Minehead Hobby Horse, Minehead, Somerset.
- May 7: Heiston Flora Dance, Heiston, Cornwall. Dancing all day.
- August 11: The Burry

Man, South Queensferry, Lothian. Parade of a man covered in burrs.

□ November 4: Carrying the Tar Barrels, Ottery St Mary, Devon. Heaving flaming barrels.

□ November 11: Wroth Silver Ceremony, Knightlow Hill, Stratford-on-Avon, near Rugby. Rent money is dropped into a hollow stone at dawn.

• Spring and other school packs by Doc Rowe, published by the English Folk Dance & Song Society, 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY (0995 inc p&post) 0171 485 2206.

## Tasty young salmon — a meal to die for

### Feather report

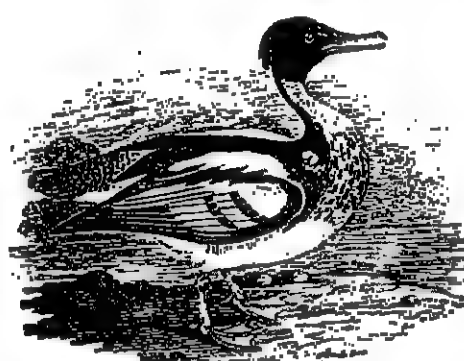
ALONG the west coast of Scotland just now, you may come across a little flock of strange-looking duck in a tranquil inlet or on an island shore. They fly up quickly and, as they head out over the sea, look extraordinarily thin and elongated. This is because they have long, flat-topped heads, and stretch their necks out absolutely straight when they fly — unlike most ducks, which dip their heads and necks when they are in the air.

These somewhat dragon-like birds are red-breasted mergansers. They are birds with, to my mind, an obscure and misleading name. "Merganser" is an English word coined from Latin in the 16th century, and means "diving goose". But although it dives, the merganser is not a goose — it is a duck of the group known as sawbills, because they have little teeth along the inside edges of their beak to hold the wriggling fish that they catch.

The "red-breasted" part of the name can also give a wrong impression. These ducks have nothing in common with a "robin redbreast". The band on their breast is more of a chestnut-brown colour. However, it is helpful in identifying a merganser when you see one far away on the water. It distinguishes it at once from its somewhat similar relative the goosander.

which is gleaming white on the breast and flanks. The merganser's most striking feature is its double crest. The drake's head is green, the female's head is reddish-brown, but both have two stiff points protruding from the back of the head, one above the other. These tufts are very conspicuous if you get a good

view of the birds swimming. In fact I would like to rename the species "the tuning-fork-crested toothbeak". They can be found in small numbers all round the coast in winter, but their headquarters are in west Scotland, and the birds that breed there mostly stay along those shores. However, their range is expanding southwards, and since 1950 they have been nesting regularly in the Lake District and North Wales. They make their nests not far from the shore in heather or brambles; sometimes they use rabbit holes. A



The dragon-like red-breasted merganser

few go far inland, and nest on river banks or by the edges of silent lochs. The ducklings join up in parties, often in the care of a single female, and a flock of 51 ill-supervised babes has been recorded.

There is no doubt that they like eating young salmon in spring, and they are shot both legally and illegally, as are goosanders — but all studies show that salmon numbers are not materially affected by what the birds take.

In February, when the sea is calm, the males start courting the females. They swim in front of them, throwing their heads back and showing off the red inside their beaks then they bow to their prospective mates. Much wing flapping and splashing accompanies the performance.

By the beginning of spring, they will be in pairs, spending more time on land. Like other sawbills, they are nimble on their feet compared with the waddling mallards. I is good news that such an odd attractive bird is doing so well

### DERWENT MAY

• What's about: *Birders* — listen for the distinctive tea-cher call of the great tit. *Twit-chers* — Ross gull at Seaford, Merseyside. *Brinnick's* guillemot at Wad Brier Voe, Shetland; *Kentish plover* at Fleetwood, Lancashire. *Details from Birdline* (09170322). Calls cost 40p a minute cheep rate, 50p at all other times.

• Robin Jacques is away.

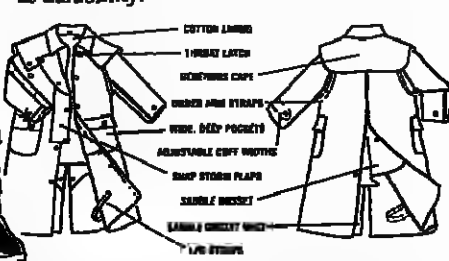
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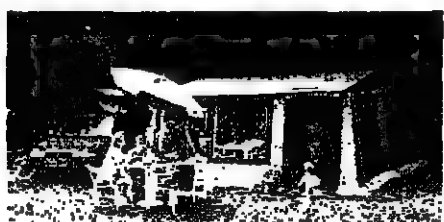
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SPAIN: The pine-covered headlands and medieval towns of Catalonia elude the advancing tide of concrete

## Still lovely after all these years

Find a road map of Spain and trace your finger round the coastline. For virtually its entire length, the costas and golfos of the Iberian peninsula are shadowed by the thick red and orange lines that mark main roads and motorways. Along the heavily built-up Costa Del Sol and Costa Blanca the motorway is hardly ever more than a few hundred yards from the beach.

Now look further north to the Mediterranean coast of Catalonia near the French border. Here, the main road is forced by the hilly terrain to swing ten or 20 miles inland past the towns of Girona and Figueras. In places, there is no coastal road at all.

This single topographical fact has helped to save pockets of this gorgeous coastline from

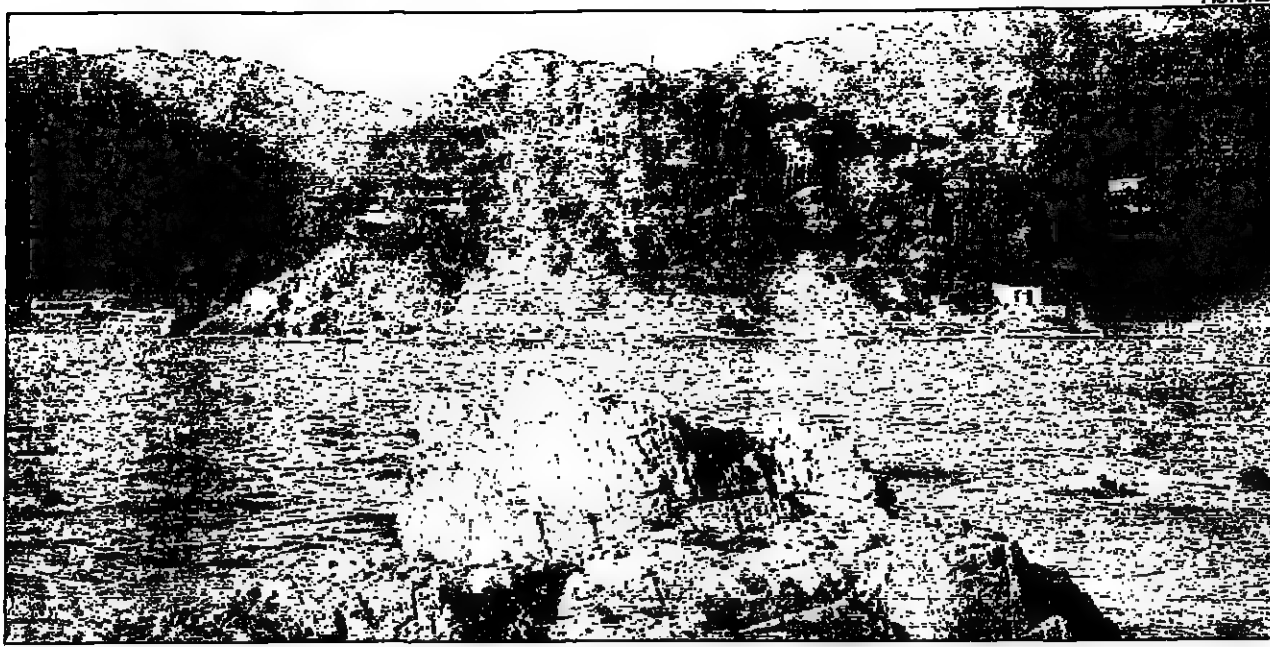


A medieval hill town

the larger lout and "tea like yer mum makes it" stakes. However, the ten-mile stretch north of Palamós is a gem, where pine-covered headlands studded with millionaires' villas alternate with sandy coves and fishing hamlets.

The string of fishing villages east of the unexceptional town of Palafrugell are the highlight of the Catalan coastline. From Calella in the south to Sa Riera in the north they are all wholly unspoilt, partly because the surrounding cliffs and hills leave no room for tourist sprawl. All have their qualities but my favourite is Lafranc, where a tree and café-lined street next to the beach adds sophistication to an idyllic location.

Accommodation on this coast is mainly low-rise apartments and villas. One of the



Huge holiday complexes have not yet defiled the coastline of Aiguablava — accommodation here consists mainly of villas

few modern hotels, the four-star Hotel Parador at Aiguablava has what must be one of the most stunning locations in all of Spain. Perched precariously on a headland above the village it is surrounded on three sides by sheer cliffs.

From its terraces guests can gaze straight down a dizzying 300 feet to the surface of the clear aquamarine water and then another 30 feet to the sandy sea bed below.

To the north near Pals the coast opens up and the coves

and cliffs make way for long windswept stretches of sand. Development has been concentrated in the holiday enclaves of Platja, a sprawling expanse of villas, golf courses, hotels and camp sites. However, this has had

the advantage of leaving the surrounding countryside of rolling fields and medieval hill towns almost unmarked by modern holiday development.

The region is oozing with history, having been under the influence of the Greeks, the Romans, the Moors, the French and the Castilian Spaniards during the past 3,000 years. The early influences are best explored at the ruins of Empúries, where coastal vineyards were cleared to reveal the well-preserved remains of a Greek settlement and a far larger Roman town that had been built virtually on the same site.

Empúries is Spain's equivalent of Pompeii but, unlike the more illustrious but woefully neglected Italian ruins, it has been immaculately restored. The mosaics, in particular, are worth making the visit for.

Many of the medieval hill-towns of Catalonia are living museums in their own right. Some — Pals is a good example — are so perfectly preserved and artfully floodlit they are in danger of crossing the line that separates romantic from twee. Others, such as Peratallada, where the grooves worn by cartwheels are visible in the cobbles, still have just the right amount of crumbling masonry. Perhaps most impressive of all is Besalú in the foothills of the Pyrenees.

The region is also rich in

contemporary culture. The Salvador Dalí museum at the artist's birthplace of Figueras is a vast, eerie cathedral rather like a garish Moorish fort. But instead of battlements, gigantic ostrich eggs top the parapets and the central atrium is covered by a huge glass dome. And the outside is the sensible bit. Inside, it gets really odd. But there is wonderful civility amongst the madness. In summer the museum opens between 10pm and 12.30am, the only part of the day when it is cool enough to consider going to a gallery.

If the museum doesn't shake your thirst for modern art there is always a day trip to Barcelona, with the extraordinary modernist architectural creations of Antonio Gaudí. The pulsating capital city of Catalonia is only an hour and a half south of Girona on the motorway.

This mixture of sand, history and culture means that Catalonia deserves more than a two-week flop in the sun. August, therefore, should be avoided. Then, the roads are swarming with wealthy Germans and French behind the wheels of their BMWs and Mercedes, and it is just too hot. By mid-September, the worst of the heat is over but the sea is still perfect for swimming.

JONATHAN PRYNN

## Search out the hidden gems of Dalí's land

Much of the Costa Brava has been overdeveloped and resorts such as Lloret de Mar and Palamós now offer little more to the tourist than a cluster of tacky nightclubs and fast-food restaurants.

Yet Catalonia offers so much to visitors, from impressive cities rich in art and culture to diverse landscapes and a sunny climate. There are places, such as Santa Cristina, where you can enjoy all this, as well as an unspoilt coastline.

Santa Cristina, although only minutes south of the ghostly Lloret de Mar, is a small, quiet and peaceful bay. Perched among pine trees on the hillside is the only hotel in the bay, the Santa Marta, a member of the Relais & Châteaux consortium. Surrounded by gardens, well-kept terraces and untouched hillsides,

the hotel is simple but pleasant, and the rooms spacious and comfortable. A long winding path descends steeply through the shady pines to the swimming pool, games room, tennis courts and beachside restaurant.

As the inevitable pleasure boats arrive every hour with hordes of daytrippers from nearby resorts, the beach gets crowded, but the hotel provides a large area of sunbeds next to the swimming pool for those who appreciate more spacious sunbathing. The buffet lunch offered by the Santa Marta included a vast array of fresh seafood, fish and other Catalan delicacies. For a cheaper option, there are beach cafés along the bay.

When sunbathing becomes boring, it is worth hiring a car and doing some exploring. The town of Figueras near the French border is more than an hour's drive away but as the



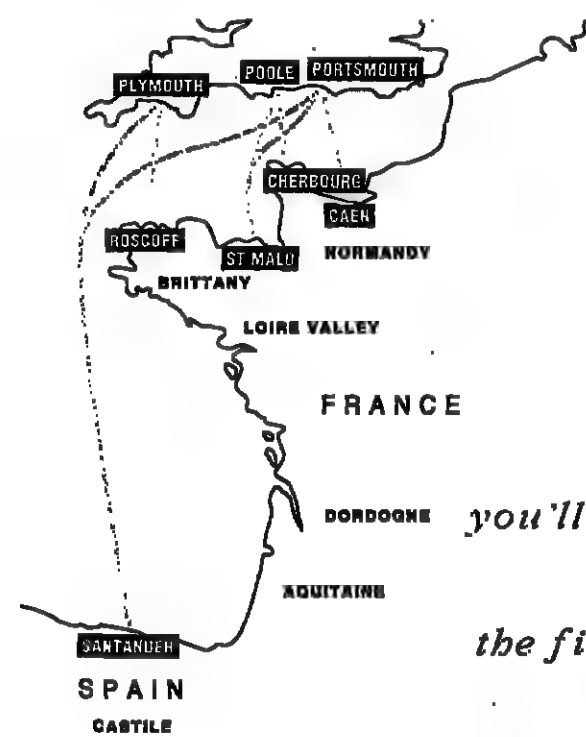
Girona's Gothic cathedral

birthplace of Salvador Dalí, and home to the excellent Dalí Museum, it is well worth a visit. The museum is original and spectacular and is the only one in Europe dedicated exclusively to his work.

En route to Figueras, it is worth stopping in Girona, a beautiful town with an impressive Gothic cathedral that has the widest unsupported Gothic arch in the world. Archaeology buffs can stop off at Empúries and visit the well-preserved ruins of this Greco-Roman city.

After a longer drive, the vibrant city of Barcelona is another holiday in itself. Wander around the old parts of the city, visit the Picasso Museum and don't miss Gaudí's Park Güell or his unfinished cathedral. It is hard to be disappointed by Catalonia. Although there are areas to avoid, parts of the coast remain as beautiful and as natural as they were 50 years ago, and with a wealth of culture and art that is hard to beat.

TESSA MACARTHUR  
The author was a guest of the Santa Marta hotel where rates range from about £75 (15,000 pesetas) to about £132 (26,500 pesetas) for room only depending on season and accommodation. Prices include service charges but are subject to a 7 per cent tax. Tel: 01034 7236924; fax: 01034 7236928. Brochures can be obtained from the Relais & Châteaux London office on 0171-287 0887; fax: 0171-437 0241.



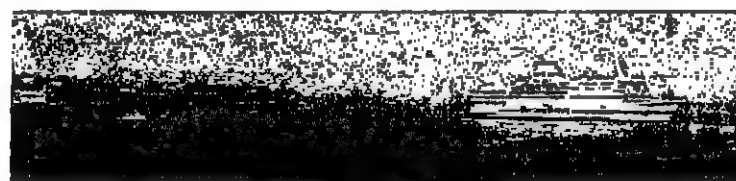
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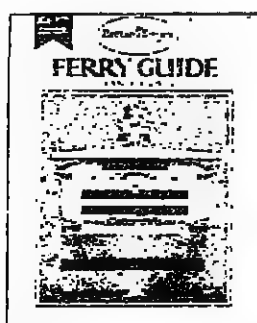
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SPECIALIST BREAKS: Jill Crawshaw examines the options for those who want a holiday with a purpose

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Up to 30 or 40 of Europe's 250 species of orchid have been spotted by holidaymakers on the firm's Great Orchid Hunts, which take place in Sicily, the Gargano Peninsula and Monti Sibillini in Italy, and cost from £695 a week (full board and wine, flights not included).

Walking and cycling holidays are also organised by Alternative Travel, largely to Italy, Spain and France, but also to Bohemia: a ten-day cycling in Bohemia trip takes an unusual route through countryside reminiscent of much of Europe 50 years ago. The tour, which covers between ten and 34 miles a day, costs £775, including food and wine. Flights are extra, and can be booked through the tour operators. **Alternative Travel Group:** 01865 513333.

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TURKISH cuisine is said to be among the greatest in the world. Simply Turkey offers a number of cookery courses in early May and in October, based at the restored village of Oakkoy, which has a swimming pool, and the famous Olu Deniz beach near by.

The course includes trips to the market, cookery lessons including "olive oil dishes", seafood cookery, minced meat dishes and pickle-making, with visits to restaurants and kitchens in the area. Accommodation is on a B&B basis, and the two-week holiday costs £645, including flights.

The company also offers painting tours and walking holidays based on Oakkoy, costing £785 (two weeks half board including flights) and £525 (one week, half-board including flights). There are no single supplements. **Simply Turkey:** 0181-747 1011.

### Corsican Specialities

CORSICAN PLACES has an interesting range of specialist-interest holidays: the new wine tour is not perhaps for the most serious winebuffs, but Corsica's vineyards are some of the most beautifully and dramatically situated in



The gardens of Villa Taranto at Lake Maggiore, Italy

France. Wine has been produced on the island for about 2,000 years, particularly the sweet muscat from the Nebbio and Cap Corse, and the rose gris from Patrimonio and the Balagna. The week's visit in May, with flights, tours and most meals, costs £625.

Horse riding also offers a chance to see the interior of the island. Rides follow the tracks between medieval villages, and the ancient paths that shepherds still use to lead their flocks from the coastal valley up into the mountains in summer. Prices for a week cost from £450-£765, including flights, based on self-catering accommodation.

More energetic pursuits include scuba diving, sailing and canyoning — the descent of a river valley using ropes and the natural water-chutes created by the river. An introductory course costs £27, a full day out £50.

**Corsican Places:** 01424 774366.

### Gentle Pursuits

GENTLER activity and hobby holidays are offered by Intravel in the kind of hotels and villages that most travellers would like to discover (and keep for themselves), among the French vineyards, the bastide villages of the Lot, in the Dolomites, the hills of Catalonia and the Provençal countryside.

Themes include "Art in the Tarn", "Cheesemaking in the Jura", "The Wild Flowers of the Cerdagne", as well as cookery holidays (mostly in France), where small groups watch the chef at work on local specialities and try to recreate them.

Intravel has a new brochure of riding holidays in France, Spain and Austria, for all abilities, from challenging week-long trails to farmhouse-based centres for learners. Some treks are accompanied; on others you can ride independently for about five hours a day, and stay each night at a farm or gite.

For a taste of trail-riding, a three-night, half-board weekend in Normandy, based at St Vaast near Cherbourg, offers about 40 miles of riding, between traditional Norman-

dy hunches. It costs £295-£301 per person, including ferry crossing for car.

A week's holiday in Andalusia's Finca los Romeros, with five hours' riding each day (three in high summer), and a visit to the Royal Equestrian School at Jerez costs £680-£879 full board, including flights. **Intravel:** 01653 628811.

### Windjamming

A NEW Windjamming Cruise from Osprey Holidays explores the creeks and coves, the inlets and uninhabited islands of New England's coast. Windjammers are the locally built wooden ships on which much of New England's prosperity was founded, carrying lumber and fish to Europe and the Caribbean, returning with cargoes of rum, sugar and wool. The *Heritage* is a crewed ship that has been purpose-built to carry 33 passengers in reasonable comfort, sleeping in cabins with washbasins, and eating every night in the galley, except for a traditional lobster bake on the beach one night.

Starting from Maine, New England's largest maritime state, the *Heritage* anchors each night in a different harbour. Itineraries are governed by the weather, and the wishes of the passengers. Prices start from £679, which includes full board on the five-day cruise, one night in a four-star Boston hotel, car hire and return scheduled flights. Guests do not need to be experienced sailors.

Walking, whale watching and cycling holidays are other options in New England. **Osprey Holidays:** 0131-557 1555.

### Discovery Holidays

THE TRAVEL Club of Upminster's programme of "Discovery Holidays" — mainly out of season — is relaxed rather than rigorous, aimed at holidaymakers who pick their favourite resorts but want to do more than just lie on the beach.

There are Spring Gardening Tours to the Italian Lakes and Madeira. The Italian tours are based on the lovely,

largely unknown Lake Orta, with visits to Villa Taranto and Lake Maggiore, the Isola Bella and Isola Madre, and to the Villa Cicogna — Mozzoni in Varese (from £588, half board, flights included).

Alternatively you can discover the spectacular gardens of Modica, from £644 for one week half board, rounding off the trip with a traditional wicker-hobgoblin ride. Other Discovery Tours include The Levada Walks in Madeira: Majorca and Menorca in May — where anyone who dismisses these islands as mere pop spots will be pleasantly surprised by the scenery and wildlife (£578 half board, one week). All flights included. **The Travel Club of Upminster:** 01708 225000.

### Peloponnese by Rail

BOTANY, archeological and painting tours are organised in several locations by the Greek specialists Filoxenia. The company's most unusual one is the 497-mile "Peloponnese Narrow Gauge Railway Tour" in June, along the longest metre gauge railway in Europe.

The tour goes from Athens up to Corinth, across the canal to Argos and back via Kalavrita, Olympia, Kalamata and Tolo, to circle the Peloponnese, then to Athens. There are also trips on the small-metre spur line to Olympia, and the 2h 5.5m rack line to Kalavrita. Accommodation in hotels en route.

Among the highlights are the section the Greeks call "the evil staircase" — along the ledge in the steep cliffs overhanging the Gulf of Aegina, considered some of the finest railway scenery in the world — and the dramatic descent through the Kalavrita Gorge.

The week's half board holiday including flights, costs £719, and can be combined with a week in Tolo for an extra £214. **Filoxenia:** 01422 379999.

### Real Holidays

THE 1995 Aito Directory of Real Holidays, which includes the programmes of 150 independent travel companies, has a large and useful section on specialist-interest holidays. Discover the World (016977 48361), for example, offers a nine-day polar bear-watching holiday in Canada, £1,598, including flights and B&B. There are also horse-drawn carriage tours through Bavaria, archery breaks and husky sledging in Lapland, Greenland and the Yukon.

Aito (Association of Independent Tour Operators) members are all bonded to provide financial protection for travellers. The brochure can be obtained by phoning 0891 515948. Costs cost 40p a minute cheap rate, 50p a minute at all other times.



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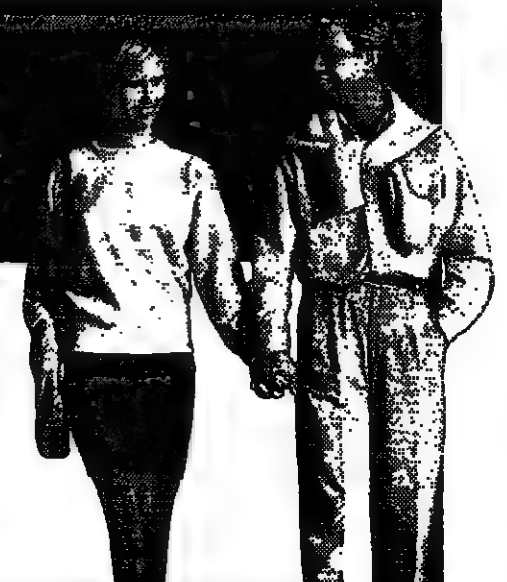
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# A quick waltz down the green Danube

When he was 19, Patrick Leigh Fermor set out to make a journey on foot across Europe. In *A Time of Gifts*, written partly from memory nearly half a century later, a kind of composite *Schloss*, the sort he often stayed in on the Danube, begins to form in his mind. Books and sheet music — the lieder of Schubert and Strauss and Hugo Wolf — are scattered carelessly on casement window seats; *aperitifs* arrive in the form of incomparable nectars, their bottles still dusty from ancient cellars. At night, candles and paraffin lamps light him to bed along dim, antlered corridors where, lulled by the smell of logs and beeswax and lavender, he pores over priceless atlases and manuscripts, pressed lovingly into his arms by his polyglot hosts, culled from libraries of fabulous provenance and age. Frankly, it's enough to make you spit.

But this was, after all, in 1933. In those days, the Danube was still one of the wildest rivers in Europe, its forests haunted by wolves and ghosts and will-o'-the-wisps. Monstrous catfish with tiny eyes and Hapsburg chins drifted through the waters, so big they were capable of swallowing a poodle whole.

Today, harnessed by hydro-electric plants, the Danube is not exactly the municipal waterworks Leigh Fermor feared it might become, but still more canal than cataraet. And, another thing: it isn't blue, it's green.

I know all this because I went there with Martin Randall Travel on a river cruise — a week-long "Festival of Music



Beethoven: musical feast

and Architecture". With more than a dozen concerts and as many lectures in abbeys, palaces and country houses, principally along the Austrian stretch of the Danube, the tour was billed as the finest holiday ever for art and music lovers. We started at Passau, in Germany, an ancient princely bishopric at the confluence of three rivers: the Danube, the Ilz and the Inn. Our first concert that evening was an organ recital in the cathedral, one of Central Europe's earliest major baroque buildings. The organ is the largest church organ in the world: it has 17,774 pipes. The sound it makes is a visceral thing, as much bodily sensation as pure music. To the strains of Mozart, Karl Höller and Liszt, in the vast elliptical domes above us swarms of chubby white putti peeped out from cornices, cavorting between garlands of lacy stucco fruit.

That night our Bulgarian river cruiser, the *Rousse*, swept downriver into Austria, and we woke the following morning next to the little town of Grein. Grein is said to be onomatopoeic for the lament of a sailor who once drowned in a whirlpool near these shores. He was left to die, so the story goes, as a propitiatory offering to some unnamed Teutonic god, although his ghost, if he ever had one, was swept out long ago by the energetic broom of some rich burger's wife.

You could eat off the streets in Grein (as you could in Linz, Tulln and Dürnstein, the other towns on our itinerary). As a more cheerful alternative, I went for *Sachertorte* and coffee at the Kaffeesieder Blumenstrau in the main square. Sitting on the terrace, overlooked by a fairy-tale castle, I tried to imagine (as Leigh Fermor did) a winter canvas here, something austere and icy. But Bruegel-esque peasants stooped under faggot-loads, and children spinning tops and blowing on frozen mittened fingers, disappeared from these Danube lands about the same time as the catfish.

Instead, there's something unnervingly Toy Town about these little squares, with their spires and fountains and prosperous sugar-almond merchants' houses. What begins as an echo from the *Nibelungenlied* ends up, curiously, like a stage set from the *Nutcracker Suite*.

The Benedictine Abbey of Melk is another matter. You first see it, as you are meant to do, from the river. It hovers up like some Broddingnagian conceit out of a massive out-



Built by monks in the 18th century, the Benedictine Abbey of Melk is a set of palatial buildings containing a magnificent baroque library

crop of rock. Recognising no authority other than the person of the Hapsburg Emperor himself, in the 18th century the monks built with a feverish rush of Counter Reformation blood to the head. They commissioned a series of palatial buildings, complete with imperial apartments (the Emperor used them, as he did at Melk's sister monastery, Götzweig, rather like 25-star hotels), to produce one of Europe's greatest baroque treasures. I loved Melk for its library,

and for the view, and for a brief glimpse, in among a team of identically lycra-suited Italian cyclists, of a real, live monk. From the balustrades, we looked down over a great curve of the river, fringed with willows and poplars, which in the afternoon light turned that thin, smoky colour so peculiar to the banks of the Danube, and delicate silvery blue.

Another day, another concert. In Vienna, it was Mozart and Beethoven at the Schönbrunn and Auersperg

Palaces. At Schloss Kitzsee, near the border of the Slovak Republic, the New Budapest String Quartet played Bartók, Dvořák and Haydn. At Atzenbrugg, a short drive from Tulln, we listened to a Schubertiade in a small white-washed manor house, perfectly cool and shaded by walnut trees, where the composer himself often stayed during the summer months.

No holiday for slovens, this. There was a pool and sun deck on the *Rousse*, but barely time

to use them. At our lectures, the first of which began at the daunting hour of 8.30, we learnt to distinguish between Early, High and Late Baroque; to recognise a Rococo flourish; to trace the Byzantine twists of the Hapsburg family tree.

By this time, alliances had been formed, and even friendships, among our hundred-strong group. At lunch and dinner we ate our way through 65 courses in all. The tour celebrity, Claus von Bulow, had been duly noticed — even if his exact identity was sometimes a little slower in coming. "I'd just like to say," breathed a star-struck Japanese woman to him one day, "how very much I enjoyed your film..." But that, as they say, is another story.

The moments when art and life become perfectly merged are rare. Our last concert, given by the Collegium Viennensis in the great Marble Hall of the Augustinian monastery of St Florian, was one of them. With the windows wide open on to a balmy summer night, the sound of Mozart's *Gran Partita* seemed to hover in the air long after the last notes had been played, shimmering upwards into the highest reaches of one of the greatest baroque structures ever built, a symphony of gold leaf, marble, and blue and pink *trompe l'oeil* saints. This may have been 1994, but in its own way, it was still a time of gifts.

KATIE HICKMAN

## Fact file

□ The author was a guest of Martin Randall Travel, specialists in art, architecture, archaeology and music tours.

□ The Danube. A Festival of Music and Architecture tour costs from £1,490 to £2,250 all inclusive. Early booking is advisable for the next tour in June.

□ Contact Martin Randall Travel, 10 Barley Mow Passage, Chiswick, London W4 4PH (0181 742 3355; fax 0181 742 1066).

## CRUISE TIPS

□ Solo's (0181 202 0855) has a 14-night holiday in Russia, starting on August 5, including a cruise aboard the MS Lenin from St Petersburg to Moscow. From £1,075 per person based on two sharing, including return flights from Heathrow, full board, all shore excursions, four days in St Petersburg, and four days in Moscow.

□ Princess Cruises (0171 800 2345) has four 12-night cruises in September and October from New York to Montreal, calling at Newport, Boston, Bar Harbor, Saint John, Halifax and Quebec. Prices from £1,895 (after discount if booked more than 60 days in advance) including return flights from Heathrow or Gatwick, free regional flights within UK, and on-board accommodation.

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\* The itinerary for our 28 August departure is in reverse order.

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5.15pm July 16, 1994.  
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Voices were raised as crab number 30 hit the finish line. "Right," I said tearing up my betting slip "dinner anyone?" Well, if you can't beat 'em, eat 'em.

Last night I was savouring soft shells at Turkey Joe's waterfront tavern, where I learnt the arcane secrets of crab whacking. And just the day before it was Snowcones, a consolation prize for failing to checkmate the reigning Dupont Circle chess champion.

Tomorrow perhaps I'll lunch on Bertha's Mussels. Or maybe lash out on a ballpark chili dog and see if I'm better at calling strikes than I am at calling winning crab.

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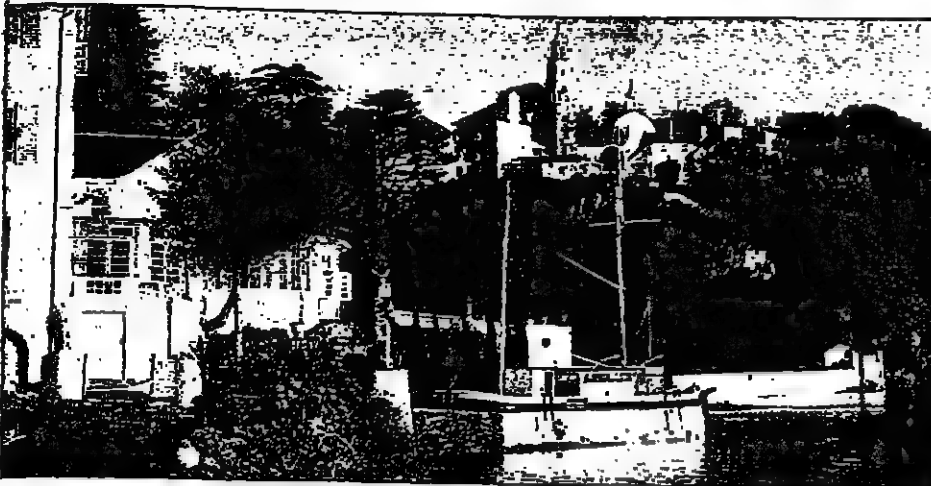
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NORTH WALES: The magical creation of an architect who traced his ancestry back to medieval princes

# Village that grew out of the Celtic mists



A ketch "tied up" at the quay is anchored in concrete

Time was when London's glitterati could travel first-class directly from Paddington to Portmeirion, that Mediterranean transplant in the Celtic mists around Snowdonia. The patronage of such celebrities as Arthur Koestler, Margherita Laski and Richard Crossman transformed the North Wales resort into a sort of Llanhamstead. Everyone who ruled anyone, from Edward VIII to King Zog of Albania, fetched up in this Italianate outpost on Cardigan Bay.

Sir Kenneth Clark often checked in on his periodic wartime visits to keep an eye on the nation's art treasures, stored for the duration under a nearby mountain of slate, and Noel Coward dashed off *Billie's Spirit* there more than 50 years ago.

Insufficient accommodation once frustrated a proposed visit by Bernard Shaw, although H. G. Wells and Bernard Russell were more fortunate. The hotel in the resort, The Portmeirion, rears its enviable popularity. Only recently, it was made to accommodate Richard Gere, Sean Connery and the crew of an Arthurian saga being filmed in Snowdonia.

Portmeirion is the brainchild, or more accurately, perhaps, the love child, of Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, an eccentric local architect who traced his ancestry back to the medieval prince of Gwynedd. The village, set in a cleft on the wooded coastline, owes everything to him — even its name. Portmeirion slips more easily off the Anglo-Saxon visitor's tongue than Aber Iâ (Icy Esuary) — its original name.

Icy it is not, and even frost is a rare occurrence. In November, when I visited, hydrangeas and fuchsias were blooming, oblivious to the approach of Christmas.

The village, which was built piecemeal with the profits from the architect's successful practice in London, was begun in 1925 and completed in time for his 90th birthday in 1973. "Clough", as he was known to lords and labourers alike, bought his tiny peninsula, and set about transforming it into a Cymric Portofino.

Like Citizen Kane, he acquired architectural fragments from far and wide to create what he termed his "home for fallen buildings". There is a colonnade from

Bristol, a ballroom ceiling from a Flinshire mansion and a classical facade from Cheshire. In his Xanadu, architectural styles combine in unlikely harmony. Jacobean stonework sits by Mediterranean stucco, and classical columns near rustic cottages.

Nothing is ever quite what it seems. On closer inspection, the strategically placed window with its lace curtains relieving the boredom of that blank wall turns out to be a *trompe-l'oeil*. The ketch apparently tied up at the quay beyond the heated swimming pool is anchored in concrete.

Every vista might have emerged from a child's pop-up book of fairy tales. Gilded Siamese maidens dance atop pillars on the piazza; a portly Buddha, looking as though he might have over-indulged in the hotel's dining room, contemplates the terraced gardens and the crouching statue of Hercules. Perhaps to restore the religious equilibrium, a carved St Peter preaches from a pulpit overlooking the cobble of Battery Square.

It could all so easily have been the proverbial dog's breakfast, but somehow what Sir Clough termed his "light-opera approach to architecture" produced a joyous gesture of defiance in the face of sterile uniformity.

Small wonder the village was an ideal setting for *The Prisoner*, the 1960s cult television series starring Patrick McGeehan. The faithful make pilgrimages each summer to attend Prisoner conventions.

Sir Clough's architectural legacy poses certain problems for his heirs. He was 43 when he embarked on building Portmeirion, so it was inevitable that he would have to cut the occasional corner. Robert Llywelyn, his grandson and the managing director of Portmeirion Ltd, says the old man had little time for such details as damp courses, insulation and soundproofing, and a new generation is picking up the consequent bills.

Plumbing bored the architect and he was never convinced of the need for such fripperies as private bathrooms, even for VIPs. He was prevailed upon to install one, however, for a visit by the Prince of Wales and Mrs Simpson. Mr Llywelyn says: "He contrived it so that the



Charm — on many levels



A touch of religion for Battery Square. Left, and the jumble of architectural artefacts and styles collected from around the world by Portmeirion's creator

Prince had to jump over the bath to reach the toilet."

Before he died, at 95, the old man had the wry satisfaction of seeing his folly become a Grade II listed site, which meant it could not be tampered with by anyone — including him.

It is still possible to travel to Portmeirion by rail, but from Euston now, and you have to change at Shrewsbury and Machynlleth. As a guest of BR's Central Infrastructure Services, I was invited to take a turn in the driver's cabin — a far more interesting treat than the flight deck of a jumbo jet

where nothing but clouds are on offer.

As our two-carriage train burrowed through a tunnel of greenery in Powys, a buzzard was obliged to concede right of way on the single-line track. On the last leg of the journey from Machynlleth, we often appeared to be careering along a beach with the waters of Cardigan Bay lapping at our wheels. Scores of seabirds, startled by our intrusion, kept pace with us.

A melodramatic sunset transformed the western sky into a blackcurrant sorbet as we rumbled across Barmouth

Bridge. The 800yd-long construction was closed in 1980 by the ravages of a species of ship worm that left its wooden piles looking like Gruyère cheese. When it seemed that the Victorian creation might never reopen, Gwynedd County Council, no doubt recognising its contribution to local tourism, stepped in with financial help. Thanks to the council, the Cambrian Coast line still affords a romantic approach to Portmeirion and a minibus will pick up hotel guests at the tiny halt of Minffordd.

ALAN ROAD

## WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 29

## OPSIMATH

(b) One who learns late in life, from the Greek *opsē* late + *mathētein* to learn. Useful for teachers writing report cards: "Justin's results in English, History, Maths, Science, Latin, Greek, French and General Effort were admittedly a little disappointing, even for him. But at this stage he has certainly laid the necessary groundwork to make a future for himself as an opsimath."

## VELLETTY

(a) A gentle volition, an almost passive inclination towards some act or objective. "I sense within myself a certain velleity to get up and go to work," you murmur to your bed-partner as the sun steals across your futon at 9 am. T. S. Eliot: "Velleities and carefully caught regrets," sort of rhymes with, "Among the windings of the violins/ and the arriettes/ of cracked cornets."

## FUGLEMAN

(b) A drill-sergeant or other soldier who stands in front of a group of drilling soldiers so that they can follow his lead. Hence, any front-man, spokesman or leader who cuts an imposing figure and compels the members of an organisation to dance to his or her tune. From the German *flügelmann*, *flügel* a wing + *mann* a man.

## BASTINADO

(c) A punishment, of oriental origin, in which the soles of the feet are beaten. From the Spanish *bastinado*, French *bâton*, a stick or rod. The term is useful for waiters wanting to preserve their dignity in dealing with tiresome customers. When she palpates and rejects the third avocado you have offered her and in so doing makes loud aspersions on your integrity, you should smile imperceptibly and say: "Would Madam perhaps prefer the Bastinado?"

## How to get there, where to stay

Alan Road visited Portmeirion as a guest of British Rail's Central Infrastructure Services and Gwynedd County Council.

Passengers for Minffordd from Shrewsbury change to the Cambrian Coast line at Machynlleth.

Admission to Portmeirion until March 31: adult £1.50, child 65p; high season: adult £3, child £1.50.

A standard room at the Portmeirion Hotel (01766 770 228) costs £58 a night, room only, until March 31. A deluxe suite costs £98, accommodation only. High season charges will be £68 and £115 respectively. The hotel has an open-air pool (heated May to September) and a hard-surface tennis court. Guests play free of green fees at the local 18-hole golf course (three miles away).

## TRAVEL TIPS

□ The National Trust for Scotland's (0131 243 9331) self-catering brochure contains 32 properties, including cottages, flats in castles and seaside houses. From £190 a week for a flat sleeping four in the 17th-century St Andrew's House, adjacent to the Palace of Falkland in Fife.

□ Countrywide Holidays (0161 224 2855) has a four-day bridge course, for club-standard players, at the Forest Side guesthouse at Grassmere, Lake District, from March 13 to 17. The cost for full board and tuition is £129 a person.

□ Countrywide Holidays also has half-term family breaks. Six days visiting Portlock, Dunster Castle, Glastonbury, Exmoor and Fowey costs £339 for a family of four (children



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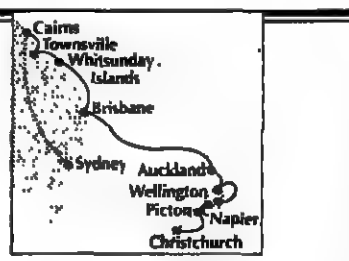
under 15), including full-board in a guesthouse.

□ Queens Moat Houses (0645 102030) are offering discounts of up to 50 per cent on spring weekend breaks. Prices from £40 a person for two nights' bed and breakfast. Choose from 90 three-star to five-star hotels throughout Britain. Offer ends April 27.

□ The Youth Hostels Association (01629 825850) has five-day (Monday to Friday) children's breaks at the Ravenston Youth Hostel in Derbyshire, exploring the countryside, and craft activities, from July 31 or August 7. Cost: £175 a child (eight to 12 years), including full board and activities. Supervised by National Park Study Centre staff.

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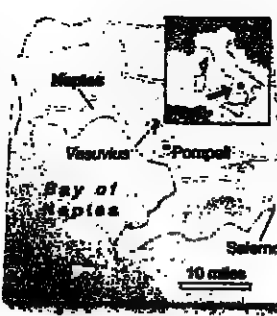
SOUTHERN ITALY: A city that believes in miracles but is only now daring to hope for its own regeneration

# Neapolitan revival

Life in Naples is a balancing act between the "terrible and the beautiful," said Goethe. Struggling up the side of smoking Vesuvius, a hanky pressed to his nose, he looked out over the remarkable paradise below and added that Neapolitans would be different if they weren't "wedged in between God and Satan".

Since AD79, when the voluptuously painted Pompeian villas were smothered in bubbling lava, a battle of extremes has characterised Naples. It can be beguiling and loathsome in equal measure. It's the kind of place where a midday visit to a trattoria to feast on the freshest spaghetti alle vongole is prefaced at the door by an encounter with uncollected refuse left by dustmen on strike.

Where else would you see an archbishop guarded at the altar by armed security men as he holds aloft a precious phial of the local saint's



congealed blood, waiting for the annual miracle of its liquefaction? If the miracle does not come to pass, it's a disaster for Naples.

This is heaven, and it's hell. But since the war, and until recently, God's been the loser. Tourists have stayed away. The scales have been tipped in favour of the forces of corruption, resulting in decay. Ignoring the very things that put it on a par with other great Italian cities, a self-serving administration allowed Naples' treasures to deteriorate through neglect, vandalism,

unscrupulous urban ventures and decay.

But things are changing. Naples is reawakening — probably the last truly great west European former royal capital to do so — and very much because of the efforts of Mirella Barracco, a baroness who presides over the *Fondazione Napoli '99*, a foundation that works to foster the restoration of Neapolitan treasures. Its name recalls the year 1799, when revolutionaries introduced a brief but not forgotten period of intellectual freedom and achievement.

Baronessa Barracco's hope is that by the end of the century much will have changed, that Naples will have shed its damaging image and that a refrain heard by those trying to enter locked Neapolitan monuments: "Chiuso per restauro". (Closed for restoration), will become a thing of the past. The statement really means that the building is in a bad way, not that restoration is in progress.



The great city on the Bay of Naples, with Mount Vesuvius in the background: home to a vigorous people said to be "wedged in between God and Satan"

Baronessa Barracco's hopes rest on the success of the foundation's restoration initiatives and her *Napoli Porte Aperte* (Naples Opens its Doors) project which, now in its third year, has highlighted the city's plight. Based on the

French *Portes Ouvertes sur les Monuments Historiques*, it has succeeded in opening free of charge, annually for one weekend every May, dozens of places normally closed either through neglect by the authorities or because they are in private use. A decision on when the openings will happen this year has yet to be made. Schools have enthusiastically "adopted" monuments, appointing their pupils as guides. Having then researched the history of, say, the Palazzo Doria d'Angri, an old palace (now a school) hiding jewel-like interiors, gives the youngsters a pride in their city's heritage.

*Porte Aperte* attracts more than a million visitors to about 160 monuments normally closed. About 20 per cent are foreigners, indicating a thirst by locals for knowledge of their city. Book now if you want to be there in May — although a weekend visit at any time of the year, particularly if it coincides with opera or ballet at the magnificent Teatro San Carlo, is well worth the effort.

A certain barometer of change in any city is its plan for dealing with the traffic. In Naples, it has been a chronic malady desperate for a cure. Now the cars have been kicked out of the newly restored Piazza del Plebiscito, an elegant square by a horrifying intersection which pedestrians would cross at their peril.

There's more: after half a century, San Giovanni a Carbonara, damaged in the war and since closed, has reopened restored, its ancient tombs glorious memorials to the rogues who once ruled Naples. And the Capodimonte picture



Lottery agents in action

gallery in which one of the world's great art collections once was marooned in decay, is being overhauled. Meanwhile, selected highlights from Masaccio to Andy Warhol, via Titian and Caravaggio, can be examined in their temporary home at the lovely neo-Classical Villa Pignatelli.

The momentum gathers force. The *Napoli Sacra* itinerary ensures that the key churches are opened every Saturday morning. It's the time to visit Gothic Santa Maria Donnaregina, San Giovanni a Carbonara, and baroque San Giorgio Armeno. Major places — San Lorenzo, Santa Chiara and the Duomo — stick to Italy's traditional opening hours (daily, morning and late afternoon) and all the monuments, museums and ex-

cavations along the ancient Decumano Maggiore are open daily (10.30am to 4pm) except Sunday — including the chapel of the Pio Monte della Misericordia with its Caravaggio altarpiece, and the Cappella Sansevero (open until 5pm) whose astonishingly realistic sculpture pleasantly blurs the sacred and profane.

This is the place to sense the city's erotic undercurrents: Modesty, naked but for a flimsy gauze, bubbles away on her pedestal, anything but modest. And after a look over the collections of the cleaned-up Museo Nazionale Archeologico, it's easy to imagine that early Neapolitans simply went about naked. Everywhere deities are exposing themselves — in marble, on frescoes, pots and jewels — no doubt in the same tradition that later caused Boswell to

his Naples visit to run after "girls without restraint", his "passions violent". There are places that can be seen simply by wandering in off the street. Try Sanfelice's Palazzo Serra di Cassano (4 Via Monte di Dio): its double baroque stair is sculpture masquerading as architecture. His, too, is the monumental stair of the Palazzo Sanfelice (5 Via Arenella della Sanità), lurking at the back of a flat-filled courtyard heaving with emaciated cats. Walk in, have a look. This is the Sanità district, where you'll find that Naples really is a crossroads of Africa and Europe, a rendezvous of chaos and anarchy. Watch your bag, hide your Rolex but, please, forget that other cliché, "Vedi Napoli e scappa" (See Naples and run).

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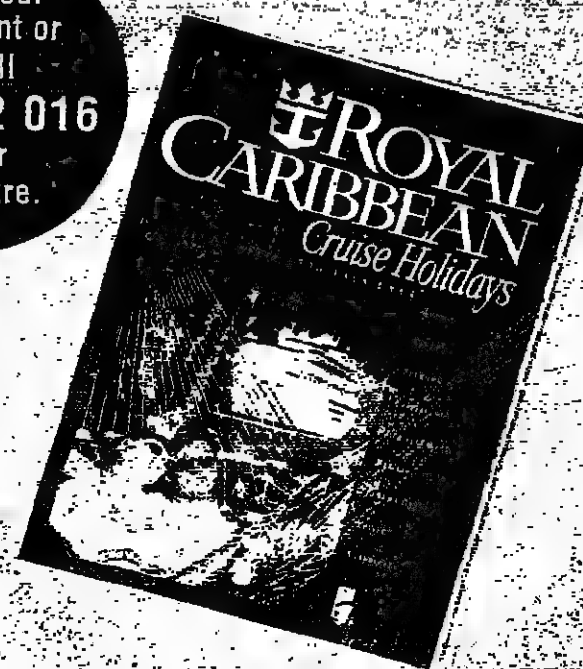
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## TRAVEL

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SKIING FOR WOMEN: Improve your technique and increase your confidence without an uphill struggle

## Leave the men behind

With varying degrees of success our group of five skiers tackled the most taxing snow conditions of the winter.

At any time, the unpisted 2,100 vertical metres off the shoulder of the soaring peak of La Meije, down to the expert-only resort of La Grave in the French Dauphiné, is a challenge. With weary legs in the dying light of a late March afternoon, the task ahead seemed Herculean. The continuous process of thaw and refreeze had transformed what was otherwise a perfect powderfield into patches of ridges and runed ice, interspersed with a dangerous breakable crust.

Our guide was an unsympathetic mountaineer who took no prisoners and allowed no time for rest. The group was made up of my partner and myself, plus friends — a man and a woman. We had begun the day as equals in fitness and experience.

Almost immediately the men surged ahead, using brute force to power through a field of translucent ice debris which had tumbled down from the Glacier du Râteau. But the women were not as fortunate. With waning energy we were forced to jump-turn through the boulders and thick crust to make up for our lack of strength. As we tired we began to fall — and fall. That was the day I realised that some skiers are more equal than others.

It is a problem with which women of all standards have to contend. Men are heavier, stronger, and more aggressive. They hop into icy couloirs and other equally terrifying terrain while we think: "What will happen to the children/husband/boyfriend if I fall down a crevasse?"

When the wind chill factor drops to minus 20C and you can't see your gloves — let alone your group, the men hardly seem to notice. All you can think of is the proximity of the nearest mountain restaurant.

And a steaming mug of hot chocolate. Yet you dare not concede and be shown up as a wimp. The search for a solution to this problem took me last season to Beaver Creek, Colorado, for a Technique Week For Women.

Strangely, no one could tell me in advance what I could hope to learn. Friends teased me mercilessly with suggestions of an alpine Tupperware party in which wholesome housewives traded recipes for apple pie and beauty tips. Others muttered predictably of Sapphic liaisons which neatly replaced the desire to ski with men anyway.

The Americans, with their penchant for therapy, have been running women-only ski workshops for over a decade, and the trend has now caught on in Europe.

The US even has a specialist magazine *Skiing For Women* which warns readers that these courses may not be for everyone: "Women who feel they need to be pushed to make progress in skiing may have little patience with the non-threatening, supportive teaching approach that women's clinics generally take."

Over the get-to-know-each-other breakfast at the Hyatt Regency — having missed the 7am stretch class — any fears were allayed. My neighbour, over muffins and weak American coffee, was a 47-year-old grandmother living in Honolulu. She and her husband had opted for separate classes.

Laura, a 37-year-old orthopaedic surgeon from Texas, confessed she was fanatical about improving her skiing and "joins every course going". Marisa, a 40-year-old from Miami, was on holiday with her husband and children, but preferred skiing with other women. Claudia, 51, was a writer and mother from Denver who skis most winter weekends. Finally there was Amy, a 25-year-old from nearby Avon, who looked and dressed like a ski fashion model.

The six of us made up the top level of the course together with our teacher, Carol Levine. She asked what we wanted to concentrate on during the course and the consensus was: "To improve our bump skiing and use less energy."

On the snow, she told us, we should be "aggressive, but silky", and our skis should "slice, like slicing a tomato, not chop". Her advice worked reasonably well for me, but more successful was: "Choose an alibi rather than a line to ski through the moguls and imagine you are stretching your legs out as you turn round a bump. Don't rise up as you turn." We skied the moguls with less effort and more style after that.

Essentially, this bland but enjoyable course offered the chance to take a group lesson in a relaxed and uncompetitive atmosphere. I came away with a little more technique and a lot more confidence.

Most American resorts offer women-only courses. The Olympic medalist Holly Flanders runs Ladies Ski Adventures at Park City in Utah, while Kim Reichhelm, the 1991

World Extreme Skiing Champion, hosts Women's Ski Adventures at Crested Butte in Colorado.

A trickle of forward-thinking ski schools in the Alps are now following suite. The most developed is Ski Principles' Workshops for Women in Meribel. Sue Saunders, the director, says: "The structural and emotional differences of women are rarely taken into account when learning to ski... The workshop allows you to exchange experiences with like-minded women."

Women's courses are also run by Sally Chapman, of the Ski Company, in Tignes and Courchevel; Jane McGarry, of McGarry The Ski System, in Châtel and Chamonix; and by Sue Dickson, of Ski Masterclass, in Courchevel.

But if you want to go the whole hog — or rather sow — join the Women's Ski Wholistic Mountain Retreat Week in April in Grand Targhee, Wyoming. It promises "Bodywork, yoga, herbal healing, reflexology, life-reading, meditation, crystal work... and skiing".

FELICE EYSTON

## Fact file

□ The author was a guest of Orient Express Hotels and Ski the American Dream (0181 552 1201). A week's package staying at The Lodge at Vail costs from £1,049. A week at the Roost Lodge costs from £695. Both prices are per person, in a double room, including breakfast and return flights from Heathrow.

□ The Techniques Week for Women course at Beaver Creek (20 minutes by ski-bus from Vail) costs from \$1,495 (£960) including six nights accommodation with breakfast, and four days of lessons. Course only (four days) costs \$875 (£560). Vail Associates (001 303 945 9200).

□ Ski Principles' Workshops for Women (01803 852185) in Meribel cost £145 for three half-days plus one full day. The Ski Company's (01279 653746) one-week ski technique improvement package costs £400 including accommodation and lift passes but excluding flights. McGarry The Ski System (0181-399 5823) women's courses cost about £400 for a week including chalet accommodation, five days' tuition and transfer (no flights). Ski Masterclass (01479 510614) courses cost £700 (£83) for five two-hour sessions.



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## SKI NEWS

AFTER a poor start to the season at Christmas, skiing bookings are pouring in as the poor weather that has hit European lowlands inundates the Alps with snow. "We're getting up to 60 phone calls an hour," says Neal Manuel of FlexSki, a firm that specialises in last minute weekend breaks to Verbier and Courchevel.

With half term looming, and the February high season starting, snow conditions are excellent everywhere in the Alps, and unbelievable in America. Mammoth Mountain in California has had a phenomenal 87cm of snow so far this winter. In Europe most snow has fallen in the Austrian resorts of St Anton and Lech. In central Switzerland and in the Trois Vallées region of France.

Off-piste skiing is highly dangerous, with serious avalanche risks keeping the higher sectors of Chamonix and Verbier, for example, closed. But Andorra, Norway and even eastern Europe have most pistes and lifts open. Skiing on piste in low-altitude resorts such as Wengen and Söld is good right to village level.

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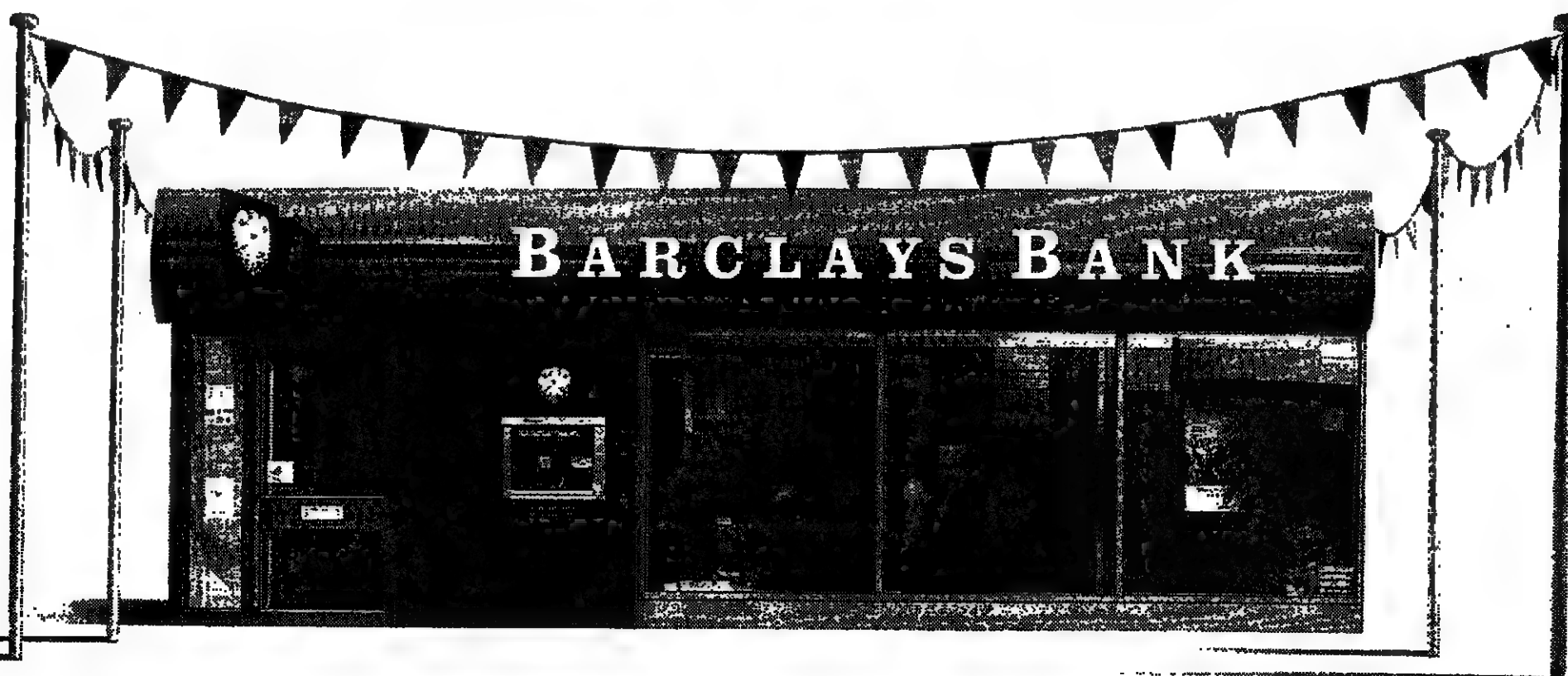
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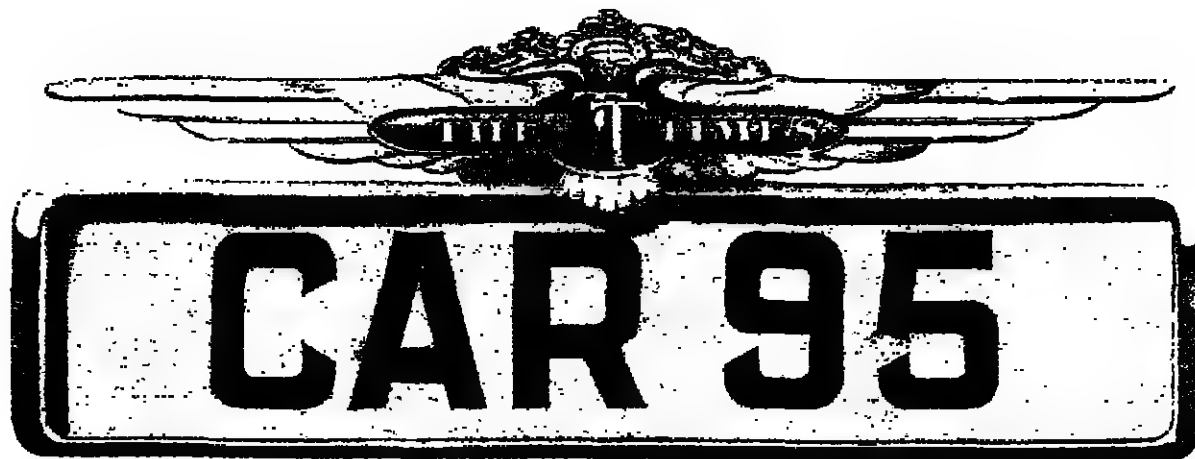
VEHICLE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

JP 11/15/50





Spotlight falls on the ladies who race  
Page 12



The Jaguar — is this the first car to beat the thief?  
Page 10



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 4 1995

This car will try to smash the sound barrier. Is the pilot crazy or Britain's bravest man?

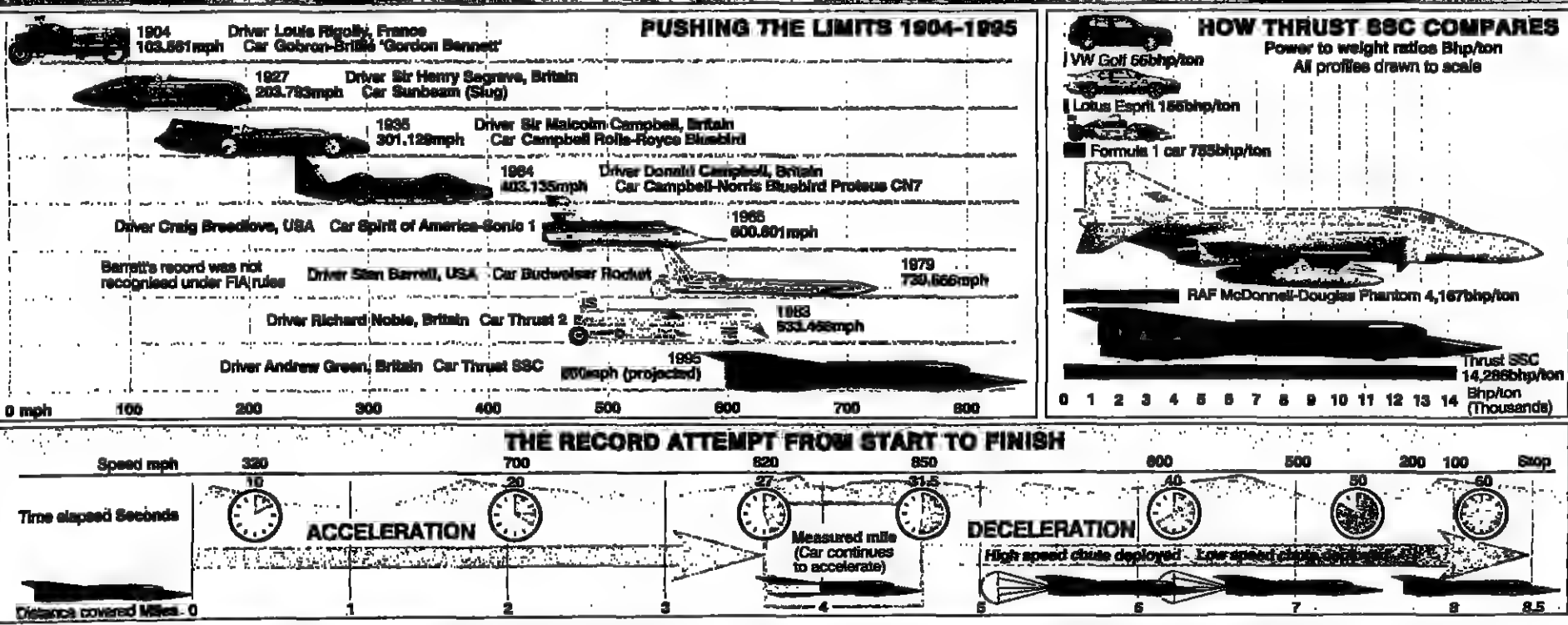
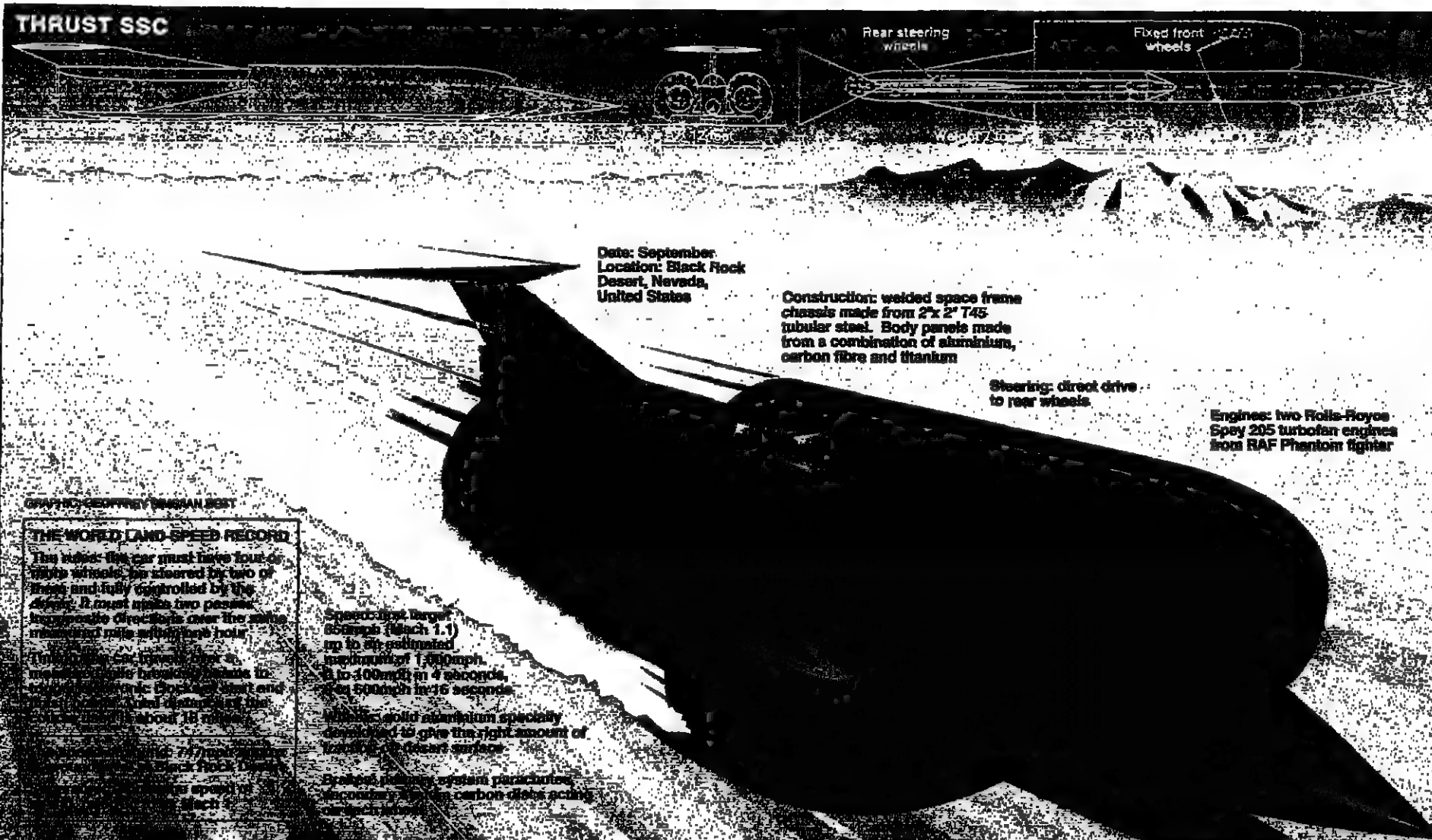
# Drive into history at 850mph

Andy Green is either crazy... or the bravest man in Britain. For he will be strapped into a machine with the power of 141 Formula One cars and fired through the sound barrier within 30 seconds of pushing his foot down on the throttle (Kevin Eason writes).

Green is used to travelling at 850mph — but several hundred feet up in the air in his RAF Tornado. This time, Flight Lieutenant Green will not leave the ground, if all goes well, during the most ambitious attempt yet on the world land-speed record.

Not content with breaking his own record of 633.468mph, set 12 years ago, Richard Noble has set up a £5 million project to make a Briton the first man through the sound barrier in a four-wheel car.

The brief Noble set was as exacting as any great engineering feat and one which



many said was beyond today's designers. Noble, though, is not a man to be told it cannot be done. He wanted a car that would not only break the record but at 747mph, known as Mach 1, leave behind a sonic boom to scare the vultures of Nevada's Black Rock Desert. Then there would have to be more, for he believed the right car could hurdle on to 850mph (Mach 1.1) and even 1,000mph. The car — Thrust SSC (for supersonic car) — will be rolled out in June and Noble is confident it can achieve his targets because his small team has overcome two key problems.

The first was finding enough power, which in Thrust's case comes from two Rolls-Royce Spey engines (normally fitted to RAF Phantom fighter-bombers) that provide 106,000 brake-horsepower. To understand that much thrust, imagine 141 Formula One cars or 1,000 Ford Escorts welded together to achieve a single surge, enough to catapult Thrust to 100mph in four seconds then 600mph in 16 seconds. Within 30 seconds, the car will be at maximum speed and have covered five miles of snooker-table-flat desert sand.

The second problem was more intractable. A projectile as sleek and aerodynamic as Thrust will want to obey the laws of physics and take off as it reaches top speeds. If it succeeds, the dream will be shattered in an appalling fraction of a second.

From his experience with the first Thrust mission in 1983, Noble understood the risks only too well. Missiles expert Ron Ayers helped devise the trick of shifting the centre of gravity further to the front of the car by moving the

**THE PILOT**

PH Lt Andy Green flies Tornados, hurtles down the Cresta Run on a toboggan, runs marathons and has a first-class degree from Oxford. Page 3

engines forward and placing the driver on a perch in the middle. That should keep Thrust's nose pinned to the ground as the needle on the speedometer winds round towards 800mph.

At that point, the driver will be able to do little more than watch and wait as the two huge Rolls-Royce jets, worth £1.5 million each, roar furiously on either side of his tiny cockpit, firing Thrust to record speeds.

Green is well aware that if anything goes wrong, he will be measuring mortality in fractions of a second. Noble spelled out the risk factor to 30 applicants wanting the place of honour in the record books: he wrote to each individually and ranked the risk as somewhere between high — and very high.

Yesterday, Green became the would-be successor to Noble's title as the world's fastest man, chosen for skills that bear little relation to a jet fighter-pilot equipped with high intelligence, remarkable hand-eye coordination and reflexes, the ability to understand the machine's behaviour... and the discipline to feel no fear even when the surrounding landscape has disappeared into a blur.

For Green, it is the ultimate dare, a once-in-a-lifetime challenge for a unique place in motoring history. For both Noble and his 32-year-old protégé, it is also the chance to prove that Britain still has the skill, enterprise and daring to conquer a new engineering frontier.

If Green succeeds in bursting through the sound barrier in September, he will join a roll call of speed record-breakers that includes John Cobb, Malcolm and Donald Campbell, Henry Segrave — and Noble himself.

"I know it's not fashionable to admit it," Green says, "but to attempt the land-speed record in a British car, with a British flag on the side and a British team supporting me, would make me extremely proud."

## Talking toolkits to speed repairs

Kevin Eason on a hi-tech move by the RAC

**BREAKDOWN** patrolmen will soon repair cars guided by a computer voice that can give information on almost every car to run on the roads of Britain.

The RAC has finished pilot trials of a new hand-held electronic workshop manual, about the size of a portable CD player, which holds the equivalent of 160,000 pages of technical information compiled by the motoring organisation over decades.

By the end of this month, its 1,400 patrolmen will all be equipped with the computer, which contains such accurate data that the time taken at some breakdowns will be halved, says the RAC.

The next stage is to have a synthesised voice talking the patrolman through repairs. He will simply plug in headphones and listen to the instructions as he works under the bonnet.

The "talking toolkit" is under development and still about two years away, says the RAC. Peter Brill, a spokesman, said yesterday: "That is the ultimate goal, so the patrolman can be working with both hands under the bonnet with the computer guiding him through each

**INSIDE**

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stage of the repair." At the moment, the patrolman dials in the make and model of the car and describes the fault to the £450 electronic book, which works using a CD-Rom compact disc.

The computer diagnoses the problem, from its memory stored on compact disc, estimates how long a repair will take and how much it will cost. The patrolman then calls up a diagram of the car as a guide to repair the fault.

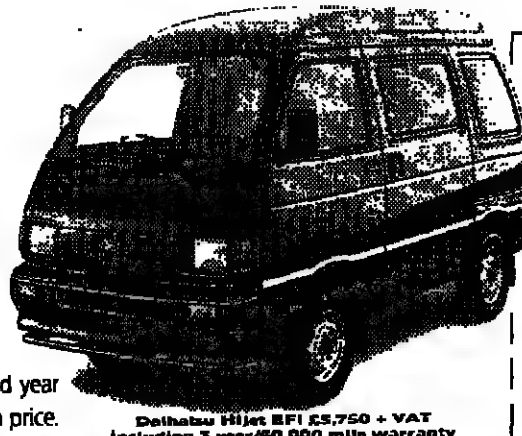
The computer replaces bulky files that vans have had to carry in the past. Motoreye patrolmen, unable to carry manuals, have had to rely on their own knowledge or arrange for members to be towed away, but now the computer can be carried in their pockets.

The disc is updated every month so that the RAC is abreast of technical changes on models. Car makers also get feedback from patrolmen, who log details of each repair so manufacturers can trace any recurring problems with their models.

Mr Brill added: "The sheer weight of information has always been a problem for our patrols. They simply could not carry every piece of information with them and they would have to struggle with manuals in the pouring rain."

"The computer stores all that information in one tiny package, doing away with the need for all that paper. We estimate that we will save on sending out 30,000 sheets of A4 size paper this year with each patrol — the equivalent of 3,200 trees."

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How can it cost more to have a car sent 15 miles from a factory in Swindon than from Toledo, Ohio?

## Stand and deliver: a case of highway robbery

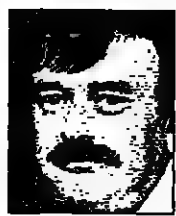
According to the motor trade, if I buy a shirt at Marks & Spencer I pay a delivery charge. Nobody complains to M & S about that, but everybody complains to the motor trade about their delivery charges. Therefore, the motor trade is being unfairly singled out by people like me.

I said at the outset that this column would be unfair if it so chose, so let us get on with a campaign to get rid of delivery charges. First, we shall have to deal with the M & S comparison. The price of a shirt in that store is, of course, dictated by the cost of making it and getting it to the rack, plus a mark-up or profit margin.

This is normal commercial practice and it differs in one crucial way from the delivery charges imposed by motor manufacturers. A shirt in M & S is marked with a price and nothing is added on at the check-out for delivery. The price of cars is almost always advertised net of the delivery charge.

I take a random example from the back cover of Top Gear magazine, which carries an advert for the Seat range. You would have to be registered blind not to read "the Seat range starts at £6,767" but I need reading glasses to discover what the

### DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

asterisk refers to: "Price excludes £410 cost of delivery to dealer premises and number plates."

Nearly every manufacturer is up to this stunt and a stunt is what it is. Nor does the delivery charge remotely reflect the cost of getting a vehicle from the manufacturer to the dealer. I happen to live 15 miles from the Honda factory in Swindon, but a Honda Accord built there will cost me £382.93 for delivery charge and number plates, excluding VAT. A Jeep Cherokee, which is built in Toledo, Ohio, will cost me £330 for delivery and plates, excluding VAT. As I said, no relation.

Worse yet, a motor car appears to be one of the few items on which one pays VAT twice, first on the base vehicle price and again on the delivery charge.

I am told by the Retail Motor Industry Federation that there is an "ongoing discussion" as to whether these charges should be incorporated in the overall sales figure. This discussion should not be ongoing, it should stop right now.

But bear in mind when next a dealer offers you a "discount" that the first amount he will knock off is the equivalent of the delivery charge, which is not much of a sacrifice. And I do know of people who have simply refused to pay the delivery charge and got their way, although, again, they are only getting an equivalent reduction because dealers have to pay the charge anyway.

What's needed is a conspiracy between dealers and their customers, which would stop this archaic nonsense in a very short time. Meantime, I salute those few manufacturers who advertise "on the road" prices: they deserve to do business.

By the way, in case you are wondering about the mysterious art of providing number plates as part

Easy for Barnard to gripe on about delivery charges



GED

of the "delivery package", my local auto spares shop will knock them up, while you wait, for £11 a pair.

My complaint about minuscule rear lights on lorries has brought gratifying support from fellow sufferers, but I am not here to make motorists feel superior.

So what about the dreadful hordes who apparently think that an overcast sky (about the only kind we have

had lately) is a signal for the illumination of all available lights, by day and by night?

These owl-like freaks have decided that fog lights are *de rigueur* whether or not it is foggy, especially on motorways.

Rear fog lights can be blinding in clear weather and the police tell me that their unnecessary use constitutes careless driving. They will, and do, prosecute.

Good.

## Fatal flaws in child car seats

Some baby restraints can be lethal, says new research. Vaughan Freeman assesses the safety options on offer

Safety-conscious parents who carefully click their children into specially-designed and often costly child car seats before every drive could be strapping their youngsters into death traps.

The most common kind of child seat, which faces forward and is held in place by an adult lap or three-point seat belt, is fatally flawed, according to the latest research by Renault's safety experts. A switch for all children under four to rear-facing seats would halve the number of children killed and injured each year, they say.

The French manufacturer also claims that many child seats held in place by an adult three-point seat belt and used for older children can cause grievous abdominal injuries. This is because they are not sufficiently well designed to prevent "submarining", which occurs when, in an accident, the child slides under the lap portion of the belt and the belt cuts into the child's abdomen.

Renault, which has a team of 400 experts who spend £80 million a year researching car safety, is so concerned that it is inviting every child restraint manufacturer in the world to a special safety conference to be held in Paris next month to discuss the dangers.

Renault is also to train at least one member of staff at each of its UK dealerships to give car buyers advice on the restraint most appropriate for their child, taking into account age, weight and height. The car maker will, in addition, launch a new range of restraints, designed in conjunction with Volvo, the acknowledged leaders in automotive safety.

Adrian Roberts, senior scientist with the Government's Transport Research Laboratory, does not believe the Renault findings make forward-facing seats obsolete overnight. "Forward-facing seats are giving us a very good performance and we believe there is no serious problem with them," he said.

"Rear-facing seats for younger children have their advantages but remember that in smaller cars it is sometimes impossible to get a rear-facing seat in. Also, many rear-facing seats are used on the front passenger seat so the driving parent can maintain eye contact with the child. In cars where there is an airbag on the passenger side, such seats simply must not be used."

Roberts agrees that forward-facing booster seats should keep the lap belt in place to avoid submarining. He says, though, that most problems will be avoided by buying a restraint carrying the British Standards Institution (BSI) kite-mark, and/or the Brussels-approved European Regulation R44 marking, and by seeking professional advice on choice and fitting.

Renault's new range includes the revolutionary rear-facing Argonaute model, which encloses the child's body and head. The seat is held securely in place within



Feeling small: Renault's Claude Tarriere in Gulliver, and how forces on impact affect front- and rear-facing child seats

the car by a metal brace from the floor and an additional floor harness, as well as the car's own seat belts.

Ignorance is rife among parents buying child restraints. The BSI estimates that four restraints in five in this country are wrongly fitted or inappropriate. In America, it is estimated that 70 per cent of child restraints are wrongly

fitted. Only one British parent in 20 takes professional advice about fitting restraints for their children. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents estimates that two in three of the 70 or so youngsters under 14 killed each year in cars, and the 1,400 seriously injured, could be helped by properly-fitted restraints.



Safety first: a booster seat for children aged 4-10, and the rear-facing Argonaute



Claude Tarriere, director of Renault's car safety department, says: "Figures from Sweden, where the death and injury rate among young children travelling in cars has more than halved since 1972, show that rear-facing restraints for children under four are more than 90 per cent effective in protecting the child in an accident. That is more

than twice as effective as forward-facing seats.

"If rear-facing seats were used in France, Great Britain and elsewhere, we estimate children would have twice the chance of surviving accidents."

Because children under four have a relatively weak neck but a large and heavy head relative to the still growing

body, massive spinal and thoracic injuries are common in accidents. If a child is strapped securely into a forward-facing seat, the impact whips its head forward on to its chest.

A rear-facing seat restrains the head and spreads the impact across the child's back, reducing such injuries.

Tarriere also wants a redesign of forward-facing seats for older children so the lap-belts are held in place flat over the tops of the thigh, to prevent submarining. Adult belts are held in the correct position because they catch on the hooked top of a grown-up's pelvis. The pelvis of a child under 12 is not fully developed and allows the belt to slide up and into the abdomen.

Part of the problem, Tarriere believes, is that safety designers still think too much in terms of the adult and do not realise just how much the morphology of the child differs. He stresses, too, that it is no good designing safe seats if they are uncomfortable.

Which is why Renault has developed "Gulliver", a massive car with child restraints that dwarf the largest adult, to give grown-ups an idea of how daunting, uncomfortable and intimidating cars can be for a small child. The 6m-wide seat belts are heavy and bulky, the inertia reels almost impossible to pull. Belts and buckles are cumbersome, and dig in, while thoughtfully-positioned top pockets are out of reach. Gulliver reminds adults of what it is like to travel in a vehicle that, for all the advances, is still designed for large, strong grown-ups.

To drive home the point, Tarriere believes governments, schools, doctors, health visitors and maternity clinics should inform parents about child car safety.

### THE AA'S GRIDLOCK GUIDE

#### LONDON

A316 busy and London Rd closed for an hour after the England v France match at Twickenham today.

A316 Twickenham Bridge, near Richmond: one lane each way until end of March.

A406 North Circular Rd, Upper Edmonton: width reduced on Lea Valley Viaduct until end of 1995.

A219 Putney Bridge: one lane each way for repairs until end of March.

A214 Trinity Rd, Wandsworth: temporary lights at junction with Burnwood Lane cause regular delays, especially in mornings until end of March.

A110 Windmill Hill, Enfield: roadworks at junction with Church St — one lane westbound.

A501 Kings Cross one-way system: major work starts Monday. First stage will be overnight lane closures.

SOUTH EAST

M25 Surrey J7-8 (M23/Reigate): contraflow causes regular delays and affects traffic joining from M23 northbound.

M25 Surrey J10-11 (A3/Chertsey): widening work with contraflow.

A3 Guildford: contraflow between Abbotswood and the Cathedral interchange.

A329 Bracknell, Berkshire: roadworks at Mill Office roundabout (junction with the A329/A328/B3022).

A27 Chichester Bypass, Sussex: contraflow between Westhampton and Whyke roundabouts.

A3020 Dover: temporary lights Newport Rd junction with Three Gables Rd for roundabout construction.

SOUTH WEST

M4 Avon J20-21 (Almondsbury/Aust): roadworks affecting both carriageways.

M32 Avon J1-2 (Filton/Eastville): lane restrictions both ways for bridge work — peak time delays.

M5 Gloucestershire J11-12 (Cheltenham/Gloucester): contraflow until September.

M5 Devon near J27 (Tiverton): contraflow and northbound entry slip road closed.

A419 Swindon: contraflow between Tumpole roundabout and A381 junction, with slip road onto B4141 Hyde Rd closed.

A3074 Cornwall: temporary lights between St Ives and Carbis Bay. St Ives-bound traffic should use Coach Rd signposted at Lelant.

A3029 Bristol, Avon: Merchants Rd closed in the Cumberland Basin System at Junction Lock Bridge (delays on Anchor Rd and Cumberland Rd).

MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

M6 West Midlands J4-6 (near Birmingham): major work with a contraflow until March.

M5 West Midlands J3-4 (South-west of Birmingham): lane closures for barrier and lighting work, with additional restrictions sometimes overnight until end of February.

A1M near Blyth, Nottinghamshire: contraflow between Harworth and the A514 until March.

A38 north of Derby, Derbyshire: major work starting on the Little Eaton bypass with lane restrictions, and contraflow.

A66 Nottingham Ring Road: roadworks between Durdak and Nottingham Knight until April.

A46 Stonebridge, West Midlands: flyover construction at the A462 junction and widening between the M42 J6 & Stonebridge Island — (contraflow limit and lane closures).

A146 Oulton Broad, Suffolk: roadworks on Beccles Rd with lane restrictions eastbound and diversion westbound.

NORTH

M6 Cheshire J20-21A (Lymm/Croft): roadworks continue near Thwaites Viaduct until May.

M18 South Yorkshire J5-4 (Doncaster area): reconstruction starts from Monday.

M57 Merseyside J1 (Tarbock Island): roadworks and lane closures at the roundabout junction with M62, additional restrictions at weekends until April.

M62 Humber J34-35 (Whitley Bridge/Langham): contraflow two lanes each way and eastbound entry slip road at J34 closed.

A61 Leeds, West Yorkshire: width restrictions at the Crown Point Bridge.

A655 near Castleford: temporary lights working in Whitwood and down to one lane either way under the M62 bridge until March.

WALES

M4 Gwent J23-22 (Magor/Newhouse): lane restrictions and contraflow for widening between Magor and Rogiet for the construction of the second Severn crossing until June.

A472 Pontypool: demolition works on Pontypool Gyratory with lane restrictions and temporary lights affecting Rockhill Rd especially until end of March.

A5 Meirym, Chwyd: improvements continue at Llyn bands. Various lights including temporary lights at times and short-term closures until end of July.

A465 West Glamorgan, between Llanerby and Aberdare: contraflow on Salinas viaduct for resurfacing until June.

A4223 Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan: one-way system on Gellatield Road for widening work.

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SCOTLAND

M9 and M8 towards Edinburgh will be busy as will the A8 Glasgow Rd and St Johns Rd — Scotland v Tunisia at Murrayfield.

M90 Tayside J6-9 (Arlary/Muirhorn): contraflow in operation for roadworks.

M8 Lochian J1 (Newbridge): various restrictions between J1 and the Edinburgh City bypass as the motorway is under construction.

Edinburgh: width restrictions on the High Street between the North and South bridges; roadworks at Kings Rd roundabout Portobello with restrictions on all approaches.

A741 Paisley Strathclyde: contraflow on Renfrew Rd.

NORTHERN IRELAND

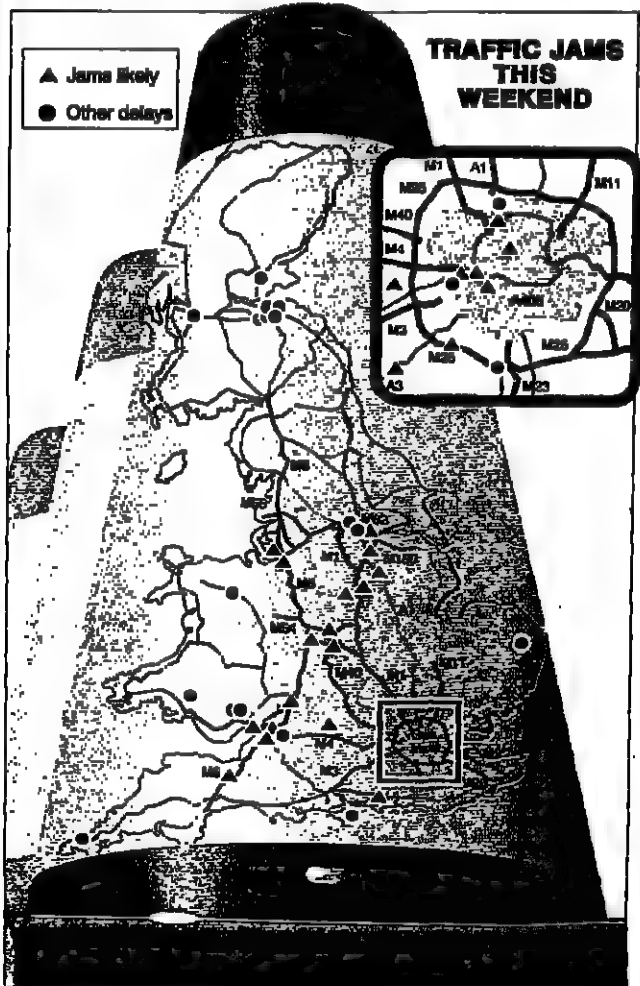
A6 Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Glenahine Rd, Cashel for resurfacing until March.

A54 Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Belfast Rd, Ballynahinch at junction with Moss Rd.

A26 Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Greenhill Rd at the junction with Ballymoney bypass.

A37 Limavady, Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Broad Rd for resurfacing until April.

Downpatrick, Co Down: Market St has become one-way between Patrick's Avenue and Irish St in connection with water mains laying.



### NEWS SUMMARY

## Pollution check anger

Proposals to allow local authorities to stop cars for pollution checks are meeting fierce opposition. The Freight Transport Association, which has 12,000 member companies, fears that private agencies will increasingly take on policing tasks on the roads but says only police should be allowed to stop traffic. Some motoring groups also say drivers should beware being flagged down by anyone not in police uniform.

## AA issues tax warning

Motoring organisations are warning that increases in vehicle excise duty from £85 a year to £4,250 on recovery vehicles could lead to severe cutbacks. The AA says that operators cannot recoup the tax increase because their vehicles stand idle for long periods until needed and then they are vital, particularly during periods of bad weather.

## Zil factories close

Could this be the end of the road for the giant Zil limousines which were regulation transport for Soviet heads of state for decades? The company is reported to be closing 12 factories because it cannot afford to pay for components. Zil, put into the private sector two years ago, needs £164 million to restart production.

## Drink-drive proposal

The Guild of Experienced Motorists wants Britain's drink-drive limits lowered in line with the rest of Europe. The guild's proposals would mean the current limit of 80 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood coming down to 50 milligrammes. The group claims support from the Parliamentary Advisory Safety Council for Transport Safety.



## Kevin Eason talks to the two men behind a new British attempt on the world land-speed record

## Noble deeds: a thrifty Golf and global glory

The man who has driven faster than any other on earth gets behind the wheel of a Volkswagen diesel every day. Richard Noble, who set the world land-speed record of 633.468mph in his Thrust 2 more than a decade ago, leaves behind the world of super-fast jet power and chooses a sturdy, efficient and economical Golf turbo diesel for a more sedate form of daily transport.

In fact, Noble is so enthusiastic about diesel power that his D-registed Golf TD covered 150,000 miles before he sold it.

"Few cars can do a reliable 150,000 miles," he says. "Over that distance, costs per mile tumble after 100,000 miles. We achieved about 14p a mile with the old car."

In fact, it would be difficult to think of a more stark contrast between the two generations of Thrust land-speed cars and a VW Golf diesel.

While the Golf is designed to carry five people in comfort and

safety, to carry a payload of shopping and allow *The Archers* to be heard without shouting, Thrust 2 was simply a superpowered rocket on wheels built to get Mr Noble to top speed in the shortest possible time.

As Mr Noble and his team grapple with the intricacies of making a car which is essentially an aircraft designed to travel on the ground, consider the contrast: Thrust SSC (for supersonic car), the car Mr Noble wants to be first through the sound barrier, is eight times faster and more than 1,000 times more powerful than his Golf — but the Golf is 2,300 times more economical, happily returning 55 miles to the gallon. Thrust SSC will gulp fuel at the rate of a gallon every 42 yards.

Even when away from the work-

shops at Fontwell, West Sussex, where Thrust 2's successor is being built, Mr Noble clearly cannot keep his hands away from machinery. He services his Golf himself and tinkers with modifications to get more power and economy.

The old 1.6 Golf got a bigger intercooler, a new air intake in the front spoiler and a new exhaust. The result: 45 miles to the gallon at 100mph and a 120mph top speed.

No need to modify the new 1.9 TDI, he says, although he may stiffen the suspension to take some of the roll out of the car.

It is not surprising that Mr Noble is prepared to take on even Volkswagen's renowned engineering. Now 48 and married with three children, he shows no signs of slowing down or abandoning the dreams that seem to belong to an



Keen Golfer: Richard Noble with his two Volkswagen diesels

altogether more romantic age. At a time when innovators are tied to computer screens and robots carry out the graft of engineering work, Mr Noble is a throwback with the

sort of sleeves-rolled-up energy and enthusiasm that gets things done no matter what the obstacles.

In a far distant age, he might not have invented the wheel but he

would have made it rounder and stuck it on to a remarkably quick chariot that would frighten the life out of an enemy invader.

The first Thrust project was very much a Noble effort, started in 1974 as he was working his way up through the engineering industry. Born in Edinburgh, Mr Noble started in business with ICI before moving to GKN, one of Britain's biggest car component groups, as an overseas marketing manager.

The urge was there, however, for something different and glorious enough to consume every ounce of his passion. That project was to be the attempt on the world land-speed record.

He founded Thrust Cars more in hope than certainty. By 1980, though, the obsession had become a full-time job, marshalling sport-

sors and the team towards the first British land-speed record attempt since Donald Campbell's in 1964. He chose to drive the car himself, risking not just reputation but life and limb, too.

Those who thought his record-breaking 1983 run would cure him should have known better. Three years ago, he was called by McLaren, the Formula One Grand Prix team, wanting to borrow film footage of Thrust 2. That set the wheels turning as Mr Noble wondered why.

He realised an attempt on his record was on the way — and he decided to get there first.

His over-riding passions are speed and practicality, and modern road cars leave him uninspired. "I seek maximum efficiency," he says. "I am contemptuous of cars that go wrong but I'm not really interested in having pretty cars or very expensive cars. They just must be totally practical."

## Go-getter chases boyhood ambition

Pilot who will try to break sound barrier on land is a proven winner

The breed comes straight from the pages of *Boys Own* and *The Wizard*. After heroes such as Roy of the Rovers and Tupper of the Truck, who excited earlier generations, comes Green of the Sound Barrier for a new age.

It seems almost impossible to describe Flight Lieutenant Andy Green, BA, RAF, in terms less than the breathless prose of the comic book characters whose feats were always superhuman.

Roy of the Rovers scored his hat-tricks in the last five minutes of the Cup Final and Alf Tupper somehow broke four-minute miles after feasting on fish and chips. Those men were square-jawed, clear-eyed, unassuming... and, by God, they were British.

Now we have a real-life Action Man in Andy Green, the man chosen to pilot the Thrust SSC through the sound barrier.

He flies Tornado fighters for a living and hurtles down the Cresta Run on a bobsleigh for fun. He runs marathons at speeds that would make top-class athletes envious, but just as an occasional pastime, and he rides motorcycles. Oh, and he has a first-class degree in maths from Oxford.

When he won his pilot's wings, he was judged top student. After his weapons training, he won the prize for best dive-bombing performance. When he moved on to fly Phantom fighter-bombers, he graduated as best student.

The list of achievements is impressive, but the best may yet be to come if he can steer Thrust SSC through the sound barrier to set a new world land-speed record.

It is Lt Green gets his chance because, he was judged the best of the breed, the man with The Right Stuff, to quote Tom Wolfe's famous account of the

lives and deaths of US Air Force test pilots.

Thirty men applied to drive Thrust SSC, all pilots apart from a couple of dragster racers. They faced a rigorous and gruelling selection procedure over nearly six months, including psychological and physical tests and a day dashing round a race track in a Volkswagen Golf GTI. It was a procedure closer to that used for astronauts than drivers.

Most of the competition was from fellow RAF pilots who had flown missions in the Gulf War and were used to the terrors of low flying at high speeds in machines costing upwards of £17 million.

Andy Green, though, was the man who combined all the required talents, and he will need every one of those skills to face the daunting tasks ahead.

Even when reminded that too many of the men who made a bid for the land-speed record have not lived to tell the tale, he is undaunted.

"Most of the deaths and injuries come from a long time ago," he said last night. "Even with speeds climbing from 300mph to 600mph over the past 30 years, there have been almost no serious accidents and there is a big team making a very safe car for me."

"There is obviously a risk, but it is not something to worry about. It is an extra challenge and something which has excited me from when I was a boy and learned of the exploits of people like the Campbells, John Cobb and Richard Noble himself."

When he climbs into the cockpit of Thrust SSC for the record-breaking run, Green will probably have had no more than 40 minutes experience of driving a machine so individual in character. The steering is like a canal boat, coming from the rear wheels, and the acceleration is the same as that of a jet fighter

It's about the most exciting thing a man could do



Speed king: Flt Lt Andy Green with the Golf GTI he raced for a day during the gruelling six-month selection procedure

taking off. Richard Noble says that from 0-350mph, the car "slides all over the place", yet the driver will have to understand and control what is happening to report to the support team, and understand a car so complex that its wiring diagram is like a Boeing 747's.

Just back from a tour of duty

flying his Tornado F3 on patrol over Bosnia, he is clearly equipped with the rapid reflexes and calm character the Thrust team will need when they reach Black Rock Desert to start the record attempt.

He is remarkably cool about what is to come this summer when his dream of legend

becomes hard fact. A single man, he warned his parents, who live in Norwich, what might be to come two weeks ago. His father, a former fire officer, and mother simply said: "Good luck. We understand."

They must have learned to live with a high achiever. Born in Atherstone, Warwickshire,

in 1962, Green gained 11 O-levels, four A-levels and 2 S-levels. When not winning academic prizes, he was rowing for Oxford University. He flew back from Switzerland this week after competing with the RAF's elite Cresta Team and recently ran the Berlin Marathon in under three hours.

Most of his work over the next few months will be designing a cockpit which, if not comfortable, will have every switch, dial and lever exactly where he wants it. "I have spent the past ten years in cockpits so I understand how important it is to know your way around everything instinctively," he said.

"Somehow, breaking the world land-speed record is a very British thing to do," he summed up. "It is part of our tradition in this country to tackle impossible things and achieve them. It is unique and just about the most exciting thing a man could do to drive the most powerful car on earth."

## RIVALS FOR THE RECORD

## SPIRIT OF AMERICA

Led by Craig Breedlove, this is probably the main challenger from the United States. Breedlove first broke the record in 1963 in Spirit of America and followed with four more records up to 1965, first through the 500mph and then the 600mph barrier.

## McLAREN MAVERICK

Secrecy surrounds the team's Woking headquarters but Ron Dennis, McLaren's boss, means business and has the budget to back the attempt. Some motor industry observers claim he has £25 million to spend on the Maverick — about as much as a Formula One team annual budget — and sponsors would clearly queue to join a McLaren project. How fast McLaren can get to the start line is unknown, though the company's talented designers and engineers are said to be working flat out. Unlike Thrust SSC, which will have twin engines, McLaren has opted for a single Rolls-Royce RB199 engine with 17,000hp of thrust, compared with Thrust's potential 100,000hp.



Dennis has budget of 100,000hp

## AUSSIE INVADER

Likely contender run by Rosco McGlashan already on a dried lake near Adelaide. The car has already hit 538mph.

## X-101

Using a combined jet engine with a rocket booster similar to an Apollo lunar landing module, this speedster comes from an American drag racing team. The car has been tested at close to 400mph using the jet engines but 740mph is the target.

## AMERICAN EAGLE

Also a dragster team and possibly the least likely to succeed on form.

## GREEN MONSTER

There was a time when Art Arfons, Green Monster's champion, was battling for records with Breedlove. He has three records to his name, the last of 576mph set in 1965.

## FROM 0 TO 600MPH

The first world land-speed record was set in 1898 when Gaston de Chasseloup-Laubat drove his Jeantaud electric car at 39mph. In 1904 Paul Baras in a Darracq broke 100mph. The 200mph mark was reached by Henry Segrave in his Sunbeam Slug at Daytona, Florida in 1927. From 1923 to 1947 Segrave and his fellow Britons Malcolm Campbell, J.G. Parry Thomas, George Eyston and John Cobb pushed the record to 394mph, set by Cobb in his Railton Mobil Special. The American, Mickey Thompson, was the first to 400mph in 1960 and although Campbell's son, Donald, briefly held the official record in the last Bluebird in 1964, the age of the jet car had dawned. The Americans, Craig Breedlove and Art Arfons, added 200mph in three years. Breedlove reaching 600mph in 1965. In 1979 Stan Barrett broke the sound barrier on land in the Budweiser Rocket, a three-wheeler powered by a Sidewinder missile. That record was never ratified.

## Japanese giant launches Euro assault while Ferrari refines a classic

Kevin Eason on a foreign first at the Amsterdam Motor Show

THE look may be distinctively Japanese but the new Mitsubishi will also be a Volvo. The former this week took the wraps of its mid-range Carisma model, which it will also make jointly with Volvo in the Netherlands.

The car will replace the current 400 series and be challenging for more than 200,000 European sales a year, rivaling models such as the Ford Mondeo, Vauxhall Cavalier and Renault Laguna.

Volvo is not unveiling its version for about six months but the Swedish badging will

have to disguise what is effectively Japanese styling and engineering, even though some design was done in Germany.

Volvo says its version will be different inside and out, with a Volvo grille and interiors and new petrol engines. Renault will probably supply diesel engines.

For Mitsubishi, the Carisma marks its launch into European production. Nissan, Toyota and Honda spent a total of £2 billion opening plants in the UK, and their British-built models — the Honda Accord, Toyota



The Carisma: a challenger to the Mondeo and Cavalier

Carina E and Nissan Primera — will be among the Carisma's rivals. Mitsubishi has chosen to get into Europe as part of a £1.3 billion joint venture with Volvo and the Dutch government.

Sales of left-hand-drive models will start in the summer with the first Carismas reaching Britain by November. UK sales are expected to reach 3,000 cars next year, doubling by 1998. Volvo's

version, codenamed the V40, is not expected in the UK until early next year.

The Carisma, a five-door hatchback, will come with 1.6-litre and 1.8-litre Mitsubishi engines and both five-speed manual and four-speed automatic gearboxes. The company promises a high level of specification compared to rival models which appeal to company fleet-buyers.

The plant at Born promises to be as efficient as the three big Japanese factories in the UK. Nearly 400 Mitsubishi instructors have been shipped in to teach the Dutch workforce and initial build times are already at about 27 hours per car. The Japanese maker says that figure will be driven down to below 20.



Classic touch: changes at front and back, but the 512M retains super-sleek Ferrari lines

THE revamped Ferrari Testarossa unveiled at the Amsterdam show could be something of a liability in Holland, where strict laws allow police to confiscate and even dispose of cars found exceeding motorway limits by more than 20kph (Maurice Glover writes).

The 512M can more than double the permissible limit of 75mph and then some. "But as we don't think many can handle its maximum of 195mph, we prefer to concentrate on acceleration," said Ferrari's Dr Antonio Ghini. "That's what puts the oomph into driving."

The new model manages 0-62mph in 4.6 seconds. (Porsche's new 180mph RS, also unveiled at Amsterdam, takes five seconds). The evocative Pininfarina silhouette remains unaltered but modifications have changed appearance at the front and rear.







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
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 8 South, ES/ASD, ALA. . . . . 127,223,858

best reviews, adjustable steering column,  
 sunroof locking. 11,300 miles. (G) . . . \$24,995  
 190E 2.0 1989 Sunbeam Silver Met, clean dash  
 seat, electric sunroof/ventilator, air con, alloy.  
 43,100 miles. (G) . . . . . \$14,795  
 190 Diesel 2.0 1992 Beryl Met, light brown  
 cloth, 5 speed manual, electric sunroof/vent  
 ventilator, OTE, 23,100 miles. (G) . . . \$17,290  
 180L, 190L. . . . .



E200 Estate 1994 Fiat, immaculate con-  
 dition, electric manual, sunroof, air con etc. . . . . \$23,995  
 E230 Estate 1994 brilliant Silver Met, grey  
 cloth, seat, electric manual/vent windows,  
 sunroof, locking, 3rd row air vents, alloy  
 sunroof locking, 5,200 miles. (W) . . . \$30,295  
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Webb Machinery, Ltd.	287	£91,995
2. 10 kW	51	£33,995
ASR, 670, 7 Series, Alps	27	£46,250
NY	147	£22,250
Steel HAWK	367	£28,995
SAW, Stone	247	£29,295

TOTAL GARE AND COMMITMENT	
94L C186 Eleg Auto, Med. 147	221,250
94L C186 Eleg Auto	207,221,250
94L C186 Eleg Auto	197,221,250
94L C208 Eleg Auto	217,224,950
94L C220 AMG Styling	57,224,950
94L C220 Eleg Auto, Med. 157	234,950
94L C200Integd Elev. Aut. 157	244,950
91H 300E Auto, Med. Alloy&A27	219,450
94H E280 24V GPe N Spec 31	242,950
63K 209TE	222,950
94L E280 Estate	224,950
94H E300D Est Auto, RF& 31	234,950
94L R230 Estate	234,950

[illegible]

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# CAR 95

Tony Dawe reports on moves to end the scandal of written-off cars being bodged up and returned to our roads

## Drive to save used car buyers from fraudsters and thieves

New measures to protect millions of used car buyers in Britain from fraudsters and thieves will be considered by MPs next week. They are contained in a Bill designed to stop the scandal of written-off cars being returned to our roads and to warn unwary buyers about cars which might have been stolen or are subject to hire purchase or lease agreements. The Bill, tabled by Michael Stephen, Conservative MP for Shoreham, will come before the Commons for a second reading on Friday and will move a stage closer to becoming law if no MPs object. It would establish a computerised register available to motor dealers and the public to check the history of any vehicle they plan to buy.

Manufacturers and importers would register details of all new cars, including the vehicle identification number, and finance companies would record cars on lease and HP deals. Insurance companies would then notify the register about cars which had been written off and information would also be stored about stolen vehicles. The register could operate alongside the existing DVLA register of keepers of vehicles. The Times disclosed earlier this year that one in four of the cars being offered privately for sale that were checked by a vehicle tracking agency had been written off by insurers. We highlighted the case of Cora Tate, a childminder from Farnborough, Hants, who paid £2,150 for a C-reg Volkswagen Passat - "big enough to carry plenty of small children" - only to discover that it had previously been written off in a crash and was a danger to drive. "It is a threat to the safety of road users that vehicles written off should be finding their way back onto our roads," Mr Stephen said. "It is also a scandal that fraudsters have got away with £44 million of honest people's money by selling them cars which were on a lease or HP agreement."

Under present law, an innocent buyer has no right to a car if it proves to have been stolen or subject to a lease agreement and usually loses his money. If the car is on HP, the buyer can keep it if he proves he was unaware of the financial tie but this does not prevent the stress caused while the case is being investigated. Mr Stephen has the backing of the Finance & Leasing Association whose members were the victims of 9,500 individual frauds last year. The association would also like the proposed register to record a vehicle's mileage every time it is sold to prevent unscrupulous dealers turning back the odometer and to record MOT tests to prevent the theft and forgery of certificates.

The MP proposes that the new register should be operated by a private company, similar to HPI Autodata of Salisbury, Wiltshire, which began offering a "vehicle tracking" service to private buyers at £15 a time in July 1993 after providing the service to dealers for many years. The company provides data on holding extensive data about second-hand cars but there is no legal compulsion for manufacturers or insurers to feed it with information. Mr Stephen believes his register would be self-financing and linked to car dealers who would be charged for every inquiry. Private buyers could check the register by dialling an 0898 telephone number.

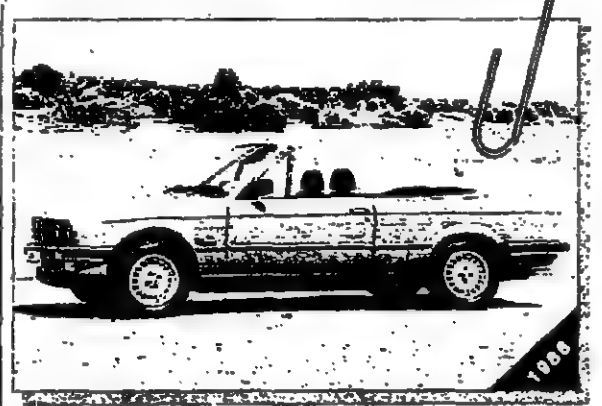
## Couple's agonising search for honesty

THE value of a register of used cars has been proved by the experiences of Maurice and Christine Humphrey of Longframlington, Northumberland, when they were searching for a small second-hand car for their daughter, Sarah, 17 (Tony Dawe writes).

They favoured a Fiat Uno and followed up a local advertisement. "The car looked good and the price was right but we decided to check it with HPI Autodata's register," Mrs Humphrey said. The company found a change of number plates had been registered for the vehicle and further inquiries revealed it had been written off a year previously and then put back on the road with new plates three months later. "Clearly, there was something to hide, so we did not proceed with the deal," Mrs Humphrey said. Three days later, she and her husband looked at another Fiat Uno. "It had low mileage but the owner wanted cash so we checked it out and found that it, too, had been written off and then re-registered."

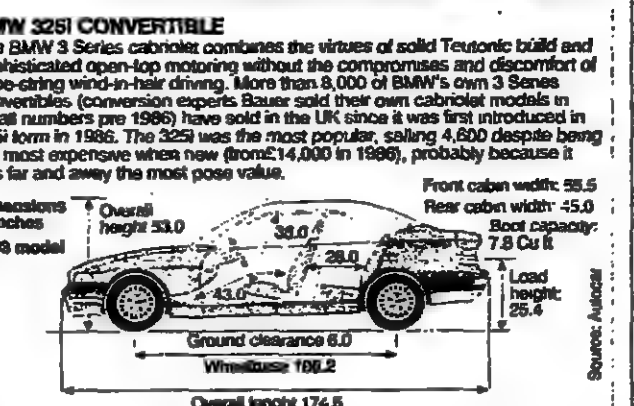
Their next Uno was owned by an elderly man and seemed reliable but they decided to check it after their previous discoveries. It, too, had been written off before the current owner had bought it. "He was as shocked as us as he had been driving around in it for a year," Mrs Humphrey said. They turned finally to a dealer and discovered a Ford Fiesta which proved what it seemed. Mrs Humphrey said, "It was unbelievable that three cars in a row should prove to be write-offs. We thought the hardest part of buying a second-hand car would be finding value for money not finding something safe."

"We regard the £60 paid to HPI as money well spent but a lot of people on limited budgets would be better to check. It's about time something was done to stop written-off cars getting back on the roads."



**GOOD NEWS:** BMW's convertible is beautifully thought out and the theory effectively put into practice. As a result the soft top is hard-wearing and easy to operate; it looks clearly out of sight when down and the interior elements and noise well when up. Unlike many soft-tops, the 325i is solid and robust and not given to rattles and squeaks.

**PRICE:** Buy now and you'll save 10 per cent on summer prices, when the car is sold as a "sunshine" premium. Expect to pay £24,000 for a 12-month old 325i with 6,000 miles, and between £10,000 and £12,000 for a 1989-1990 manual car with 50,000 to 60,000 miles. Automatic leather seats and sports wheels add £1,500 to the cost.



**BMW 325i CONVERTIBLE**  
The BMW 3 Series convertible combines the virtues of solid Teutonic build and sophisticated open-top motoring without the compromises and discomfort of shoe-catch wind-in-the-face driving. More than 8,000 of BMW's own 3 Series convertibles (conversion experts Bauer sold their own cabriolet models in 1988) have been sold in the UK since it was first introduced in 1986. The 325i was the most popular, selling 4,800 despite being the most expensive when new (from £14,000 in 1986), probably because it has far and away the most power valve.

**LOOK FOR:** 325i models have power steering and electric windows plus central locking, and most 1989-1990 models have anti-lock brakes as standard. Special editions have electrically powered doors but are more expensive.

**TO AVOID:** Plastic new windows can scratch badly. Watch for worn brake discs. Older cars (well serviced, the engine can last 200,000 miles without problems) might show oil leaks at the gearbox and differential seals. Cars with bodywork done outside BMW dealerships should be checked carefully.

**REPLACEMENT PARTS:** (prices include VAT): Spark plugs £14.99; Full service £24.99; Rear shock absorber (pair) £129.25; Front shock absorber £139.94; Alternator £223.25; Starter motor £185.13; Tyre £106.

**SAFETY RATING:** With full set of belts, the car is as safe as any other in its class. The 3 Series is also the only car to have a 5-star safety rating.

## 50 BESTSELLING USED CARS

MODEL	PRICE
BMW 3 Series 325i	33,950
Peugeot 306 1.6 XS 3dr	9,250
Nissan 300 ZX 3dr	25,795
Fiat Punto 90 ELX 3dr	6,900
Peugeot 306 2.0 Cabriolet 2dr	13,325
Audi 100 2.8E quattro Estate 5dr	18,850
Peugeot 106 XS 3dr	8,775
Discovery 2.0 4x4 3dr	13,950
Rover 350 1.6 4dr	27,700
Audi 80 1.6 4dr	9,295
Mercedes-Benz C126 4dr	32,000
Audi 80 TD Estate 5dr	12,850
Saab 900 SE Convertible 2dr	14,500
Peugeot 306 1.6 4dr	15,590
Audi 100 TD, Sepd Estate	14,275
Nissan Patrol GR 3.0 4dr	24,500
Peugeot 306 1.9 XRD 5dr	14,500
Renault Espace RT 2dr	12,275
Discovery 3.0 V8 5dr	18,000
Volvo 850 GLE 5dr	14,400
Volvo 850 GLE 5dr	14,400
Mercedes-Benz C220 Classic 4dr	18,195
Fiat Panda 1000 CLX 3dr	3,425
BMW 320i 4dr	15,850
Mazda MX5 1.8i Convertible 2dr	12,075
Ford Mondeo 1.6 LX 5dr	9,125
Mercedes-Benz 190 4dr	20,000
Ford Escort 1.6 Ghia 5dr	9,125
BMW 325i 4dr	20,885
Nissan Sunny 2.0 LD 5dr	6,525
Mercedes-Benz C280 Elegance 4dr	24,200
Vauxhall Cavalier 1.8 LS 4dr	7,675
Mercedes-Benz 190 4dr	15,590
Mercedes-Benz 190 4dr	14,400
VW Golf 1.8 Driver 5dr	9,550
Vauxhall Cavalier 1.6 GLS 5dr	8,595
BMW 325i TDS Touring SE 5dr	22,950
Toyota Corolla 1.5 GLI 4dr	8,525
Toyota Corolla 1.8 GLX 5dr	10,650
Vauxhall Astra LS 4dr	7,475
Rover 214 3dr	7,250
Mercedes-Benz 190 4dr	11,175
Mercedes-Benz 190 4dr	10,750
Vauxhall Astra 1.6 GLS Auto Estate	9,150
Rover 218 SLDT 5dr	8,885
Vauxhall Astra 1.4 LS (H) 4dr	7,050
Ford Granada 2.8i Scorpio Estate	15,850
Ford Granada 2.8i Scorpio Estate	15,178
Ford Granada 2.8i Scorpio 4dr	14,875
Ford 416 SL 4dr	8,750

Prices rounded to simulate actual dealer forecourt prices. Figures supplied by CAP Motor Research.

NOW is the time to start shopping for cars flooding on to forecourts at bargain basement prices. As our list of 50 bestsellers in the used car market, provided by Cap Motor Research, shows, prices on plenty of models are tumbling as dealers try to clear stock. January is gloomy for dealers who have just shipped out lots of 1995 cars and now have all their trade-ins to get rid of. So bestsellers, particularly fleet cars such as the Vauxhall Astra, Rover 214, Vauxhall Cavalier and Ford's Escort and Mondeo, have all slipped down the price charts. In stark contrast, Peugeot's excellent little 306 has been strengthening with demand growing for economical hatchbacks that can still offer sporty performance. Biggest gainer over the past month though is BMW's exotic M3 convertible which is clearly going to stand the test of time as a classic. The car actually put on nearly £2,500 over the month - in spite of the recession, someone is not frightened of wielding the chequebook.

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**NEW Mercedes 300 D 2.5**  
Mercedes 300 D 2.5, 21,000 miles, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 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Hundreds of owners of 'nearly-new' classics are revving up for a tussle with the taxman, writes Kevin Eason

## Classic case of mistaken identity...

Representatives of thousands of owners of 'nearly-new' classic cars are fighting tax plans which claim they could cost them hundreds of pounds a year.

Their cars may not be the classic 'lovelies' that bring a tear to the eye of enthusiasts, but owners of Austin Allegros and Ford Capris believe they could be dragged into new tax proposals which would drive their cherished models off the road.

The Allegro Club International organised a meeting last week to orchestrate opposition to government proposals to switch the current vehicle excise duty of £135 a year to a system which Inland Revenue officials call continuous licensing. That means cars would have to be taxed for a year whether on the road or not, effectively a tax on possessing the car instead of using it.

Classic cars, sometimes off the road for years for restoration and repairs, would also have to be taxed annually.

The issue has caused such a stir that more than 2,200 letters have been sent to ministers from MPs and classic car owners. The furor should mean that the Inland Revenue, currently working on a consultation paper to be published soon, is expected to give a dispensation to owners of cars made before 1970 so that their models are only taxed before being driven.

In the case of 298 recorded vintage cars made up to 1905, that could mean an outing of only once a year for the annual London to Brighton rally. About 7 million vintage and post-war classics could also escape the attention of the taxman, anxious to clamp down on excise duty evasion. About 500,000 evaders were caught in the tax year of 1993-



"If owners have to pay full annual tax for every car, then many will get rid of cars they cannot afford," says Jeff Buck.

94 in an offensive which brought in £55 million for Treasury coffers. Those evaders tended to be ordinary motorists with no intention of paying tax on their daily transport.

But as many as 50,000 cars - which include popular classics such as the Austin Maxi, Ford Corsair and Morris Marina - would fall into the revised tax trap.

Tony Marshall, chairman of the Allegro Club International,

said: "We have to endure the comments of people who say these cars are not worth saving. But they are part of our heritage and become as much classics in their own right as other cars."

"We want ministers to be careful before they damage a well supported group of enthusiasts who own cars which in future will be important contributions to the understanding of the motor industry."

Surveys show classic car

owners have an average of six models in their garage - a bill of £810 if they were all post-1970 cars. Some of those are usually undergoing restoration work which can take years in the toughest cases.

Jeff Buck, East Anglian representative for the Opel Mania Owners' Club, which has about 1,500 members, said: "Quite a few cars are used only for weekends or for special occasions. If owners have to pay full annual tax for

every car, then many will just get rid of cars they cannot afford and those models will be lost eventually."

Sarah Ibbison, owner of an American-made 1968 Ford Mustang, who attended the protest meeting, said: "My car has been off the road for two years. I would be lucky because I would just escape this limit at 1970 but it goes to prove that classic cars are not necessarily those which would be in use all of the time."

## DR DASHBOARD

### How to drive in the wet

Q After the snow has come the floods. Should I be as worried about the rain as I would be about a "big freeze"?

A Definitely. Rain can be just as hazardous.

Q So what should I do?

A Start by checking the car over now. There are just as many important areas to be sure of when coping with rain as snow, such as windscreen wipers, brakes, heating and lights, which should all be working and clean. And check the tyres, which should have the correct tread depth and be properly inflated.

Q Surely driving is not so difficult even if it is raining?

A It can be. Too many drivers keep the same speeds as in the dry and discover they are in a spin too late to do anything about it. Cut your speed and don't look at the end of the bonnet but as far ahead as you can to be ready for hazards. Also check your brakes frequently, applying them if you have just sloshed through puddles.

Q When am I in danger of getting into a skid?

A If you hit corners too fast or brake too hard. Beware of aquaplaning too. That happens when you hit a patch of water, which doesn't need to be deep, and the tyres lose contact with the tarmac. You are literally surfing. Keep an eye open for puddles along the outside lane of the motorway or on the crown of bends.

Q What if that happens and I lose control of the car?

A It seems obvious to say it: don't panic. The natural reaction is to slam

the foot down on the middle pedal as it all goes wrong but have the confidence not to. The first warning of aquaplaning is the absence of tyre noise and the steering wheel lightening. Get off the throttle fast to lose momentum and if the car starts to head into a spin, turn towards the skid to keep the car straight.

Q Is this advice the same for any skid?

A Just about. The key is to treat the car gently. Be at the correct speed when you enter a corner, so you don't have to brake halfway round. That is a recipe for disaster. Similarly, brake gently and a long way ahead of junctions. If the car starts to slide, get off the throttle and brake gently several times in a sequence called cadence braking. A series of short pushes rather than one long slam down should keep the car straight.

Q Surely nothing else could go wrong, particularly if we are moving so slowly in some of the deep water that covers most of Britain this week?

A Wrong again. Are you sure your car can negotiate deep puddles? Some cars have air intakes low down in the engine compartment and suck water into the engine if the water is too deep. The result: a blown engine.

Q If I get stuck in deep water, is there a way out?

A Some motorists remember the old trick of turning the starter motor over several times to "jump" the car out of water. If you have a catalytic converter, it will be flooded with petrol and ruined. Why not call a breakdown truck?

## At your service — a discount for low mileage

Motorists who drive low mileages and keep their vehicles serviced regularly may soon get a "green" discount on membership of Britain's fastest growing motoring organisation.

The scheme, a breakdown equivalent of the no claims bonus, is being considered by the four-year-old Environmental Transport Association (ETA) as a ploy to boost membership.

The plan is in keeping with the organisation's seemingly contradictory roles as green group and a supporter of motoring. The ETA said that

Nick Nuttall says owners who look after their cars may win a green bonus

the low-risk discount, which is likely to be around 10 per cent, would favour car owners who drive less and take public transport.

Badly tuned or poorly serviced cars not only break down more but generally pump more pollution into the air. The scheme would therefore also reward motorists who keep their vehicles in a good working condition.

Since its launch the ETA, which mirrors green motoring organisations on the Continent, has grown from zero to

more than 10,000 members. It operates a national breakdown and recovery service like that of rival organisations by using a network of 1,500 independent garages and breakdown agents to assist members.

The association, which was set up with support from alternative transport and conservation groups such as Transport 2000 and the World Wide Fund for Nature, aims to boost its numbers further by challenging its establishment rivals — the AA, RAC and

National Breakdown. Attacking and lobbying against rival organisations is at the heart of the association's philosophy and has won many members who do not own cars. In fact around 10 per cent of its number do not own a car but are keen to back schemes such as the association's Green Transport Week, an annual bash which promotes cycling, car sharing, rambling by train and political campaigns for more public transport.

"The AA, the RAC and National Breakdown are all

members of the British Road Federation. This means if you are a member of any of these organisations, you are indirectly giving your support to bulldozing the countryside for more roads, in turn creating more noise, more pollution and more accidents," the ETA claims.

Dr Jeremy Vanke, environmental manager with the RAC, says to characterise the main motoring organisations as anti-environment is misleading. He says the RAC supports groups such as the

National Society for Clean Air and the Countryside Council for Wales.

However, he concedes they may have to look themselves at some of the green schemes offered by the ETA. For example, the new organisation also offers a breakdown service for more roads, in turn creating more noise, more pollution and more accidents," the ETA claims.

The ETA, The Old Post House, Heath, Weybridge, Surrey, 0932-628882.

### REGISTRATION NUMBERS

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Jaguar's XJ range is beating auto crime, reports Kevin Eason, motoring correspondent

# Is it impossible to steal this car?

It bristles with the sort of technology that that would baffle the average scientist. Jaguar's new XJ saloon, though, will face a tougher test than a confrontation with the world's best brains — on the streets, where thieves seem able to beat even the most sophisticated systems to steal hundreds of millions of pounds worth of cars every year.

The Jaguar is different — and it could be the most difficult car in the country to steal.

The British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association, which represents companies that run about a million company cars and lorries, yesterday named the Jaguar XJ series as winner of its annual anti-theft award. If proof was needed, Jaguar

## MOST PRONE TO THEFT

- 1 Ford Fiesta RS Turbo
- 2 Vauxhall Astra GTE
- 3 BMW 318iS Coupe
- 4 VW Corrado 16v
- 5 BMW 320i
- 6 BMW 325i
- 7 Ford Orion 1.6i Ghia
- 8 Rover Metro 1.4 GTi
- 9 VW Golf VR6
- 10 Ford Escort RS Turbo

Source: Norwich Union Insurance

could not find a single case of its new XJ range being stolen over the past year.

The armoury of equipment devised by a team of more than 50 electronics experts and engineers over three years is presenting the sort of challenge a thief detests. Car crime is now so rare (one million thefts and break-ins a year, costing insurers £450 million) that devising security equipment has become almost as important at companies such as Jaguar as designing a new engine or gearbox.

That is why Nick Scheele, company chairman, asked his team to come up with the best security on the market. Equipment that would be built into the skin of the car rather than bolted on. Add-on security devices can be effective, but thieves often know how they work because they, like motorists, can buy them off the shelf. Build a package into the car, which costs from £30,000, and the thief needs to know the intricacies of the model's electronics, its engine management system and its circuitry.

Jaguar's system of locks, alarms and immobilisers is so sophisticated that experts believe it is a year ahead of the competition. David Williamson, the firm's manager for electrical engineering, who

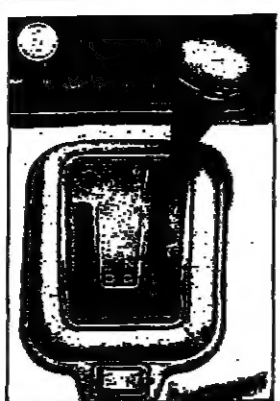
## SECURITY FEATURES

Security alarm  
Radio remote operation  
Random encrypted code algorithm  
Linked to central locking  
Perimeter sensing (bonnet, doors, boot)  
Ultrasonic volumetric sensor  
Flashing red LED warning light  
Lights flash and siren sounds  
Battery back-up for alarm  
Headlamp courtesy feature  
Interior lamps on feature  
Warning label on window

Security coded  
ICE unique  
facplate

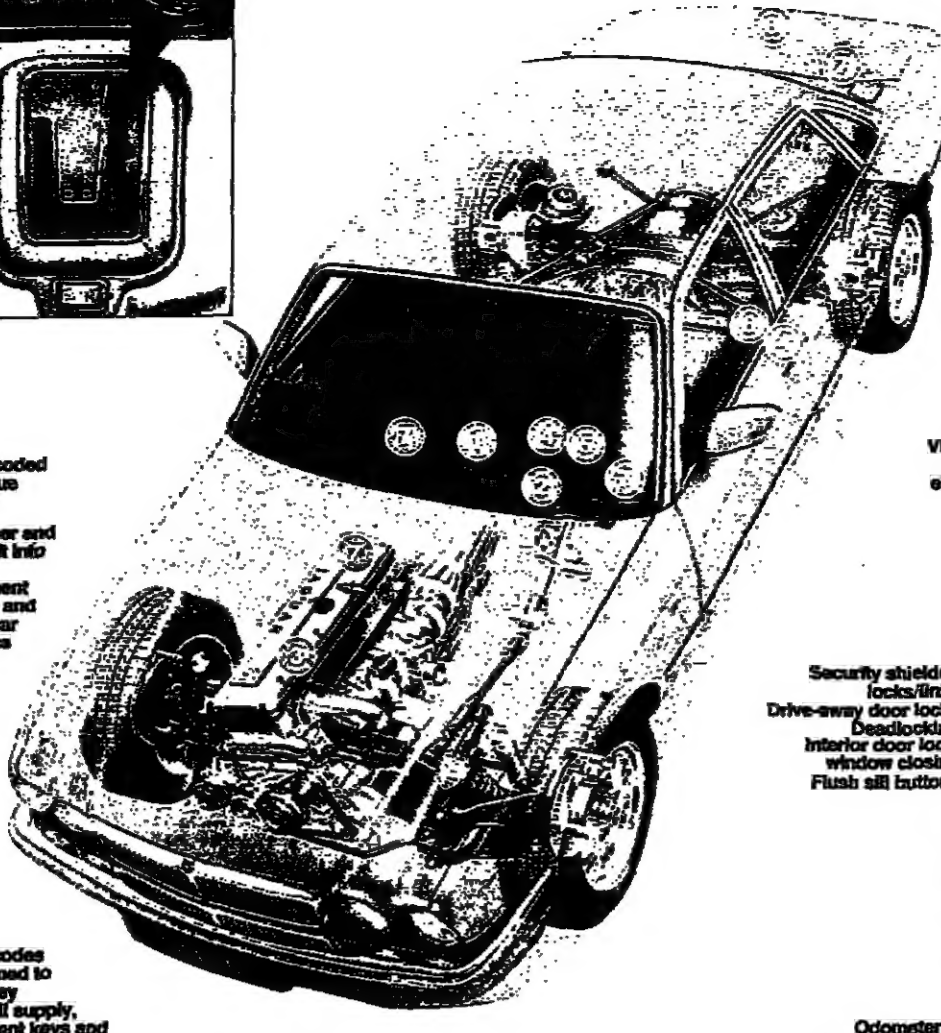
Immobiliser and  
alarm built into  
engine  
management  
computer and  
wired to car  
electronics

1 billion codes  
programmed to  
ignition key  
Body shell supply,  
replacement keys and  
chassis records  
are company controlled



Gearshift  
interlock

Reinforced boot latch mountings  
Central locking with  
boot isolation



VIN both visible  
and hidden in  
electronics and  
Alpha Dots

Security shielded  
locks/links  
Drive-away door locks  
Deadlocking  
Interior door lock  
Window closing  
Flush sill buttons

Odometer is  
tamper-proof to  
combat 'clocking'

headed the security team, said: "Our approach was to go for a complete package so no part of the security can be separated from the car. It means it is more complex at the design stage but that is also more difficult for the thief."

The system starts with the ignition key and its remote infra-red gun containing a tiny transponder with 4 billion codes, which change with each press to unlock the car. A similar system of rolling encrypted codes is built into the key to release the engine immobiliser, which is wired into the engine management computer. Start-up is impossible without the correct unlocking code, selected from a billion possible numbers.

There would be little point in trying to break through the door locks because they are shrouded but even if a thief got in, the system means the car cannot be "hot-wired". By then, the alarm, which detects entry and movement inside the car, would be sounding.

Even if a window is smashed, the car has deadlocks with the buttons flush to the sill so doors cannot be opened.

Maybe it would be easier for a thief to try "carjacking", opening the door to drive in while the car is stopped at lights or a junction. Not with the new XJ series, because all models are fitted with doors which lock automatically as the car is driven away.

The infra-red gun also activates systems for locking the boot and glovebox separately, and the biggest source of concern inside the car — the stereo — is also protected, for it is fitted into the walnut veneer fascia. If removed, it is useless.

There is also a tamper-proof device that prevents "clocking" by wily dealers, and the ingenious Alpha Dot. Owners can take a handful of microdots encoded with their Jaguar's vehicle identification number (VIN) and simply stick them anywhere in the car. Thieves cannot see them but police can read the Alpha Dots using an infra-red gun, identifying the vehicle immediately.

## FROM THE STREET

■ IT TOOK only a few moments for Geoffrey Senior to lose his Ferrari to a gang of thieves.

Mr Senior wanted to park his Ferrari 328, worth about £42,000, in the garage of his South Yorkshire home. He left the car with its 3.2-litre engine burling away at the roadside as he walked up the drive to open the garage doors. In those seconds, three teenagers were off into the distance with his car.

"The car was only about 10 feet away from me," said Mr Senior, "when I was suddenly aware that someone was around it. The next thing, it was off and I had lost it."

Fortunately, the Ferrari was fitted with a Tracker device, the homing beacon which signals the car's whereabouts to the police. Within minutes, South Yorkshire police found the car in a field but damage amounted to about £12,000.

Mr Senior has now fitted the car with an engine immobiliser to prevent it being driven away — and installed an automatic garage door.

## FROM THE DRIVE

■ A quiet drive in a quiet suburb is a happy hunting ground for thieves. One company had two cars stolen within hours of each other from what is normally considered the safety of the front drive.

A Vauxhall Cavalier SRI was stolen by joyriders, while a few miles away a Mazda Xedos was taken on the same day, this time by professionals to use as a getaway car.

Both thefts ended with damage and the form-filling that is the daily grind of fleet managers all over Britain. Laurence Harvey, operations manager for Howard Smith Papers in Northampton, has 107 cars and 52 lorries on his company fleet and theft is a constant problem he has to confront.

"We have had cars stolen which have good alarm and immobiliser systems, such as the Cavalier," he said. "There seems no way of stopping the determined thief and it becomes a calculation of the cost of installing extra security equipment against the cost of the vehicle we are protecting."

## FROM THE GARAGE

■ Even the security of a garage was not enough to protect Dave Race's car which went on a 12-hour tour of London with thieves at the wheel. Mr Race locked away his BMW 318i in the garage under his flat in London expecting it would be safe from the prying and envious eyes of thieves.

Next morning, it was gone. Thieves had forced the garage doors and the door on the BMW and driven away one of the cars which tops the list of most desirable models among Britain's car criminals.

Mr Race said: "Owners of cars like BMWs know that thieves will be looking out for them so it is as well to lock them away. You would think it was safe in the garage."

Police spotted the car in a side street a few hours later, parked with its headlights on. Then it disappeared and police followed the car, which was equipped with a Tracker homing device. It turned up next day with a few dozen miles on the clock, but at least undamaged.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Rover ready to take the pain out of accidents

Rover is offering an accident management service for all its cars registered on or after August 1st last year.

After an accident, the AA, which is managing the scheme for Rover, will take care of all details from recovery to insurance claims and repairs.

### Facts by fax

Written reports on 200 new and nearly new cars are now available from the AA by fax. Dial 0336-424999 for a list of available details and receive a four-page report by return. Price 39p a minute cheap rate and 49p other times.

### Help on hand

With more traffic comes advice on driving tips from the Collins Pocket Reference Driving Skills, published by HarperCollins, price £4.99. The pocket book covers everything from accidents to zebra crossings.

### Parity claim

Hyundai claims that it is getting close to trade parity with the UK. The company imported 12,247 vehicles worth £110 million last year but bought UK goods worth more than £81 million.

### Rallying cry

Renault is to enter the British Rally Championship with a 230-horsepower version of the Clio Williams. The five-round series starts on March 17 and ends with the RAC Rally. The little Clio, which will have a six-speed gearbox, will be cheered on by the company's 270 dealers.

### Best by miles

Alan Bryan was thinking of buying a new car — but his Escort seemed reliable enough even with 511,000 miles on the clock, he told Mr Bryan, from Hampshire, rang Ford's customer services department

You've had rather a lot of mileage from your old Escort Cynthia



to ask if his 1987 Escort diesel would keep running and a check by the company's Dagenham engine department revealed some wear on the valve guides and seats but no problems. The Escort even passed current exhaust emission tests and Ford is wondering whether this is their highest mileage Escort ever.

### Astra launch

A new low-price Astra has been launched by Vauxhall. The Astra Atlas is £600 less than the current Astra Merit E-drive at £9,495 (three-door) or £9,895 (five-door) and comes with a 1.6-litre E-drive economy engine.

### Taking the load

Britons must be carrying more shopping because sales of small estate cars are soaring, up 57 per cent in three years. Vauxhall's Astra and the Ford Escort lead the bestsellers followed by the Citroen ZX.

### Safe and sound

Mercedes has added infra-red remote locking to all its C-class, S-class and SL sports models and upgraded the immobiliser.

## NEXT WEEK

In our series of British cars that made history, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu will be looking at the Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost of 1907, a key model in establishing the company's reputation for excellence. His appraisal will again be accompanied by a finely-produced cutaway drawing.

## CAR 95

Cover title piece by Philip Castle who has worked on major commissions for Vogue, Playboy and film posters, notably for Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*. His personal paintings have enjoyed the success of three exhibitions and reflect his passion for cars, planes and movies of the 1930s and 1940s.

## Racy touches flatter a cute little mover

TIMES ROAD TEST: Alan Copps on Fiat's new sporting baby

The Cinquecento Sporting is quite literally in a class of its own. Nobody but Fiat makes such a tiny car with such sporty performance at such a low price (£6,195). But then who else would?

The Sporting is an example of a big car company doing something it is good at. Like all the best Fiats, it is small — very small — and like all Fiats, it needs driving: to get the best out of it you have to keep the revs up and work at the next little gearbox. It's hardly a relaxing drive but that's not what it was made for: it's a cheap, fun car, just like those souped-up Abarth versions in the days when the rounded little Fiat 500 provided basic transport for millions in Italy and became a cult car elsewhere.

What Fiat would like is for this bright and breezy little car to revive that trick and become a cult among younger drivers who want a first car or a trendy town car with a touch of style at an affordable price. With an overall length of just 10ft 7in and a turning circle of 20ft 9in, it is one of the most manoeuvrable vehicles you can buy. Find the right space and it would be quite feasible to try the old Italian trick of parking nose-to-tail between two cars at adjoining meters, but who would get the ticket?

The term stylist hardly existed when the original 500 abounded, but Fiat's designers have been hard at work on the new baby. It comes in only three colours, racing (violet) red, broom (very loud) yellow and shiny black, has light alloy wheels and an asymmetrical look at the front "inspired by racing car design to add a touch of originality", says the publicity material.

In fact, the look is achieved by highlighting one air intake and leaving the other plain — is this the first trompe-l'oeil bumper? The style is laid on in a typically self-conscious Italian way: you might not like the boxy cut-off hatchback shape, but you can't ignore it, and the dashboard layout, with its neatly-placed tachometer, black leather-clad steering wheel and gear lever knob, and deep hood to cut out glare, is an excellent example of how to make the practical look good, too.

The car does not, however, rely entirely on looks. Technology has moved on since the old 500 finally lost its way sometime in the 1970s. Rear engines and rear-wheel-drive have given way to a front engine and front-wheel-drive; noisy engines have given way to a smoothly revving power unit with fuel injection and cranky four-speed gear shifts have given way to a sharp, positive five-speed. Both the 1100cc



Sporting: the 3-door hatchback can reach 93mph and manages 37.6mpg around town

overhead camshaft engine and the transmission were designed for the larger Punto, so giving the tiny Cinquecento an enjoyably brisk performance.

Where better to try out this little funmobile than the rain-soaked, mud strewn and occasionally flooded roads of the West Country last weekend. The first good thing about the Cinquecento is just how comfortable it is, even for a tall driver. There's plenty of headroom, which is just as well, because this is a very responsive car: the temptation to throw it into corners or over bumps is irresistible and with such a short wheelbase, the sensations thus achieved are very direct.

Such driving might not be recommended in the long term but it did serve to emphasise how well-designed the seats are, giving plenty of lateral support without much help from the racing red seat belts which come as standard in all cars.

The roadholding was up to anything that lively driving on loose surfaces in pouring rain

presented and on a single-track, partly-flooded lane, a close encounter of the unexpected kind with an oncoming car proved that the brakes are just as adequate.

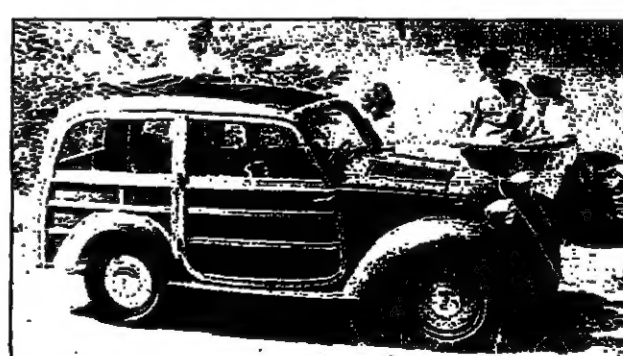
So from the driver's point of view the car proved to be fun. But I would not have wanted to be my own passenger. For a start, if the driver is taller than about 5ft 9in, there can't be enough leg room in the back for an adult passenger; and the rear wheel arches either side of the back seat do not look like comfortable resting places for long. That said, the car is hardly designed to carry four adults over any great distance. Where would they put their luggage?

Unlike its primitive cousins of the 1960s, though, this would be a reasonable motorway transport for one or two people.

The driving position is comfortable and the engine remarkably quiet at 75mph. The claimed fuel consumption at that speed of 44.8mpg would make it a very economical way to travel.

## Fiat 500 history

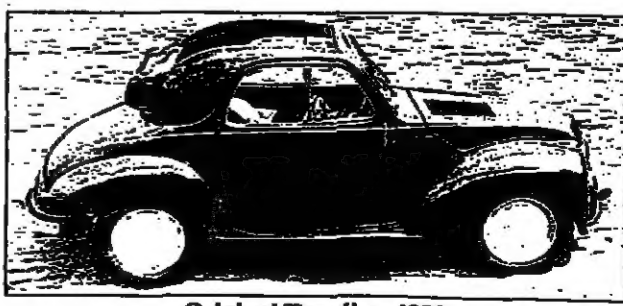
THE first Fiat 500 in 1936 was then the world's smallest car: engine capacity 569cc; top speed 85 kmh (50mph); room for two and 50kg of luggage with miserly fuel consumption. The Italian public christened it the Topolino (Mickey Mouse). It continued virtually unchanged until 1948. The more powerful 500B launched that year was the first real four-seater. The cult of the tiny car really took off in 1957 when the New 500 appeared. Over the next 18 years 3,678,000 were produced. The Cinquecento name was revived in 1992, with a choice of petrol or electric engines, the latter not available in the UK.



Rustic Giardiniera, 1948



The Cute Gamine, 1970s



Original Topolino, 1936



The classic 500



Andrew Pierce meets Nick Ashley, proud owner of the 'Strange Rover'

# 'My car can frighten a Porsche and is a cool place to hang out'

Nick Ashley, the son of Laura Ashley, has moved one of the most famous names in Britain's high streets into menswear for the first time.

He has opened an experimental shop in Notting Hill, called Nick Ashley, which is producing his own British made machine washable classic clothing.

Motorists are catered for by Nick who subscribes to his first car magazine at the age of seven.

How did you first learn to drive?

I was taught at 17 by my father. He put me in his Ferrari and made me drive from Wales to London. I was threatened with a knuckle if I missed a gear change at the right revs. He sold the car shortly afterwards and told me to earn my own.

What was your first car?

A Hillman Hunter. I took my father's advice and earned it when I was 18 by working on Saturdays in the first Laura Ashley shop which was in Fulham Road, London. I was the bag check boy.

What car do you drive now and why?

My handmade "Strange Rover". I always admired the Range Rover but not the body so I decided to make my own. Well, I came up with the concept. We took the body of a 1971 Rover P5B Coupe, recycled it onto a Land Rover chassis (which was new), added Range Rover axles, and a Chevy 5.7 engine. It can go anywhere, tow anything, frighten a Porsche, and is a cool place to hang out in traffic jams.

Do you enjoy driving? I have to. My manufacturers

are dotted all over the country, which means a lot of Little Champs. I have had good practice. I did a 1,000 kilometre desert run in Baja, Mexico and my sights are set on the Paris-Dakar rally 1997.

What is your dream car?

My "Strange Rover". It is a gentleman's club which can be hauled across any terrain with a mere twiddle of the moustache. I only wish that I had more use for the old girl. I use my motorbike, a Ducati 750 Desert Sled, most of the time.

What is your most hated car?

Those American Euro-style

compacts... from grand to bland. How the mighty have fallen. Difficult to believe that a nation which used to cruise in GTOs, and rent a Shelby from Hertz for the weekend, is now perfectly content with mobile mini tupperware boxes. Bring back the Yank Tank! Only make it with an electric motor.

What is your worst habit in the car?

Getting aggressive (rare) because British motorists always give way instead of moving into lines of traffic. You can always rely on them to let one in and then 10 nip through.

What do you listen to in the car?

Reggae, soul, Tom Jones. The Trojans. Anything with a big bass.

If you were Transport Secretary, what is the first thing you would do?

I would encourage people to use scooters and motorbikes in city centres. It would detox the city of the dreaded single driver motorcar. I could also supply the push biker clothes from my shop.

What is your favourite/most hated car ad?

It's the terrible Nicole. The dubbing is so awful. I want to throttle them both.

What infuriates you most about other drivers?

Their pointless obsession with new cars. I am a bit of a bore on this subject. But, apparently, it takes more fuel to make a car than a car will ever burn in a lifetime. It's madness. People should look after cars or buy ones which will last longer.

What's the most unusual thing you have done in your car?

My Hillman Hunter packed up on top of a Welsh mountain on a bleak winter's night. We were so far from anywhere I had to sleep in it. It was poetic justice. My father, who had insisted I bought it, was in the passenger seat. I slept like a doll. He didn't get a wink.

Have you ever had points on your licence?

Yes. I reversed a car with seven passengers through red traffic lights and crashed it into a car full of nuns in front of a gleeful policeman. He already had his pad out when I emerged from the wreckage.

What do you listen to in the car?

Reggae, soul, Tom Jones. The Trojans. Anything with a big bass.

If you were Transport Secretary, what is the first thing you would do?

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## King: launched car that's fit for a king

A COMPANY with royal connections in Malaysia has launched a sports car modelled on a 1920s-style automobile.

King Tunku Abdul Rahman of Malaysia struck a traditional brass gong to launch the Bufori, a jointly convertible made by an Australian-Malaysian joint venture company.

"Malaysia has already established a reputation as a car manufacturer with the Proton and Perodua and the production of the Bufori is icing on the cake," said the king's son, Imran, chairman of STI Bufori Sdn Bhd, referring to Malaysia's two other car companies.

Vinod Sekhar, company president, said the car would have an Australian design, Japanese engine technology and Malaysian workmanship. It will be built at a factory in Senawang, in the West Coast state of Negri Sembilan.

"While the Bufori is a classic car reminiscent of the 1920s era with handcrafted interiors of soft leather and walnut paneling, it performs like a modern sports car with a top speed of 125 mph," Sekhar said.

Jennai Cox on a novel offer that's very easy to refuse

# Park your electric car for free — if you can buy one

The offer seems too good to be true in a motoring world packed with wardens and clamps — park your car in Westminster and leave it on a meter for free — but only if it's an electric vehicle.

However the question facing motorists who want to go green and swap their Rover Metros for an electric runabout is where could they buy an electric car?

There are an estimated 30 electric car drivers in London and the scarcity of battery-powered vehicles means that Westminster Council's offer appears useless. Even if a determined motorist could find one, the smallest electric car would cost £15,000 — twice the price of an ordinary petrol-driven Ford Fiesta.

Undaunted, a number of companies are in the throes of bringing battery power to Britain. Peugeot will be making electric cars on trial at its plant at Ryton in Coventry next year.

In about six weeks, Alternative Vehicle Technology, of Taunton, Somerset, launches a new kit car, the AVT-100E, based on the running gear of a conventional Rover Metro.

Roger Fowler, a senior partner, has been working on the kit for four years and hopes to produce 25 made-to-order cars in the first year. He said: "The

insurance is low, a 40-mile trip costs 40p as opposed to £2.50 in a normal car and there is no MOT."

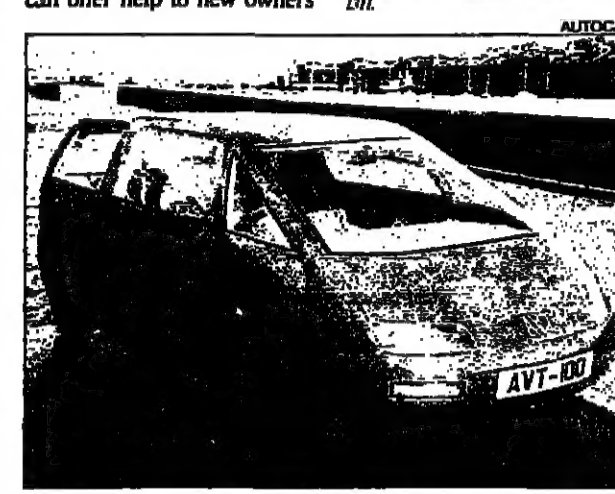
Lynch Motor Company in north London says conversions for standard petrol-powered Ford Fiestas could be available soon for as little as £7,000. There are also a number of agents dealing mainly in foreign-made electric vehicles. CCS International in Kent imports converted vans from Finland, a small two-seater Danish car and French-manufactured electric vans.

The Battery Vehicle Society can offer help to new owners

on the upkeep of their cars and sell conversion instructions for £25.

But the motor industry still has to be convinced about such vehicles. Roger King, public affairs director for the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, says: "As far as I am aware you can't go out and buy an electric car and won't be able to for many years to come."

Information on electric cars: The Electric Vehicle Association, 0933-276485; The Battery Vehicle Society, 0208 416428; Alternative Vehicle Technology, 0827 480706; Lynch Motor Company, 0746-8141; CCS-ZTC International, 0132 265159; Chesham Vehicle Exports, 0752-4775; IAD International Automotive Design, 0203-318333; Smith's Electric Vehicles, 01-82-1311.



Live wire: the new AVT-100E to be launched shortly

## In a jam and going nowhere fast

TRAFFIC jams cost Britain's motorists almost five last days of their lives every year.

Trafficmaster, the motorway traffic information service, has calculated just how much time drivers are forced to sit in queues.

According to their research, drivers who cover more than 10,000 miles a year lose a total of 1.2 billion hours a year in traffic jams. A fifth of those frequent drivers estimated they spent four hours a week — equivalent to eight days a

year just sitting still at the wheel, going nowhere fast.

The result of the jams was that a quarter of the 1,761 drivers interviewed were late for work and one in six had missed a business appointment in the month before they were questioned.

Trafficmaster has also charted the return of heavy traffic to Britain's roads since the end of the recession. Traffic flow on the M1, for example, was nine per cent heavier last year than in 1993.

That meant that the average Monday morning rush hour delay on the motorway between junctions eight and 12 stretched from 16 minutes on average in 1993 to 22 minutes last year.

Worse still, even a hint of an accident and everything went wrong. In the London area last year, there was an average of 3.6 serious accidents a week on the M1. They resulted in tailbacks of 9,600 vehicles — at least 12 miles on the three-carriageway motorway.

### ROVER

SAAC Choice From 150 Rovers, 1994/95 Rover 400i Automatic 1.6, 16V, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Rover 400i Automatic 1.6, 16V, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Rover 400i Automatic 1.6, 16V, 100,000 miles, £12,995.

### RENAULT

LAURINA 2.0 RT. 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Renault 19i, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Renault 19i, 100,000 miles, £12,995.

### SAAB AUTHORIZED DEALERS

SAAB in Warwickshire has the 1994/95 Saab 900, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Saab 900, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Saab 900, 100,000 miles, £12,995.

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### 900S AERO

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### VOLKSWAGEN

CORRADO 1.8 16V, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Volkswagen Corrado, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Volkswagen Corrado, 100,000 miles, £12,995.

### NEW POLO MOST AVAILABLE FROM STOCK

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### VOLVO

7400G 7 speed, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Volvo 7400G, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Volvo 7400G, 100,000 miles, £12,995.

### COMPANY OWNED & MAINTAINED 360 GLT

5 Door Sedan, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 360 GLT, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 360 GLT, 100,000 miles, £12,995.

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1994/95 Saab 900, 100,000 miles, £12,995. 1994/95 Saab 90



# Forget lunch! The ladies who race

Wilful women are increasingly winning in the male-led racing world, reports Morag Preston

Both men and women get "the red mist". It is what sets racing drivers apart. They feel a rush of blood to their head, a surge of passion and an all-consuming desire to win. Until recently, however, girl racers were marginalised: the confidence required to win a race was considered to be "unladylike".

Women were said to lack both the mental and physical strength needed to control a fast car. Over the past three years, however, an increasing number of successful women drivers have challenged the myth that racing is a male sport. Svelte young racers such as Kirsten Kirby and Heather Bailey have proved that women can beat men, and that the will to win is paramount.

Amanda Whitaker, 20, an accounts officer from County Durham, was the first British woman to win a Formula Vauxhall race in one of the country's premier single-seater championships. Last year, she was named most outstanding driver by the Northern Motor Racing Club. She says: "I've been at the circuit since I was three months old. Dad was a racer, so it has almost been a second life."

"Racing is a sport where women can compete on an equal footing with men. But when a woman beats them, they get a lot of grief from their mechanics. I drive a Vauxhall Lotus and reach speeds of up to 170mph. Male drivers used to think a little girl like me was a gimmick — until I got on the track."

"Racing gives me a real high. I never get nervous before a race. In fact, I'm quite calm and collected. I get a buzz out of racing, especially when I beat men. They think I'm going to dawdle, so I love it when I put the car in pole position, and there are all



Racy lady: Amanda Whitaker with her 170mph Vauxhall Lotus. "Male drivers used to think a little girl like me was a gimmick — until I got on the track"

these men behind me. There are 15 races per season, from April 1 to September 30, which costs £25,000. Dad pays £8,000 and my sponsors pay the rest.

"I've never crashed, and have only had one speeding fine — when my L-plate was still on. I am a very impatient driver, and start swearing along the motorway. I've always driven in the outside lane, and break the speed limit most of the time. My mum doesn't have the confidence to drive, and my boyfriend is a very bad passenger. He goes very quiet, even in my 1.8 diesel Fiesta."

Sarah Johnson, 29, a secretary from New Malden, Surrey, has been rallying for seven years. She is the only woman to have driven an MG Metro 6R4, the famous Group

B car of which there are 15 left in rallying today. She says: "The B stands for burn. Rallying gives me the biggest kick. It's like a drug. It's about being in control, in the seat of power."

I am somewhat hyper, and find it difficult to relax, but rallying knocks this out of me. "There are people with a natural ability to control a car, and there's no reason why

they shouldn't be women. The downside is that you have to be incredibly strong. Acceleration on the Metro is 0-60mph in three seconds. Most women aren't up to it, and I couldn't

even turn the steering wheel at the end of my first race, but now I take training seriously. Although men are more aggressive in their driving, women are as quick, and perhaps more calculating. You have to find your reaction level, and drive within that limit. Too much aggression can lead to mistakes."

"An old boyfriend introduced me to rallying. It started as a dare, then I was hooked. My friends have always been car-orientated, and have formed my service crew."

"I was very lucky to meet someone who was prepared to share his car, but the fees for road and forest rallying are expensive. It costs £7,000 to replace the engine. I've decided that a change is as good as a rest, so I'm moving on to historic car racing."



Fast track: Sarah Johnson with her Group B rally car. "The B stands for burn"

## Win a trip to supercar show

The International Performance Motor Show roars into action at Olympia next week — and readers can win a trip to London to visit the impressive gathering of cars, bikes, accessories and experts.

Answer the questions below and you could win the first prize of return rail travel to London for two people, bed and breakfast at the Radisson Vanderbilt Hotel in Kensington on February 11 and tickets to the show the next day.

The prize also includes a video, *Porsche — The Racing Legend*, worth £19.99, and a copy of the 1995 *Mini A-Z Great Britain Road Atlas*, worth £2.75.

Ten runners-up will each win two tickets to the show and copies of the video and the road atlas.

Even if you do not win, The Times offers special extras when you visit the show, held from February 9 to February 12. Present the Times token when you buy a family or an adult admission ticket and you will receive a free copy of the road atlas.

You will also be entitled to special rates, from £39.60 per person per night, including full English breakfast, at eight Radisson

Edwardian hotels in London. Guests will also receive a discount of 50% on any three-course lunch or dinner taken at any Radisson Edwardian hotel. For full details of the hotel offer, phone free on 0800-19 1991.

The show features a huge display of racing and sports cars, plus tuning equipment and accessories. From Germany, the Association of German Automobile Tuners will bring cars never before seen in Britain.

Tickets cost £7.50, or £3.50 for under-15s. A family ticket, for two adults and two children, is £18. For details of opening times and to book in advance, ring 0181-744 1585.

To order a copy of the video *Porsche — The Racing Legend*, phone Woodcote Films on 021-608 9030. The video costs £19.99 plus £1.50 p&p.

### The questions:

- 1) When and where did Stirling Moss win his first grand prix?
- 2) Which team won the 1,000km race at Silverstone and the Constructors' Championship in 1954?

Phone your answers to 0891-919 631 before midnight on Monday. Winners will be selected at random from all correct entries received by the closing date. Calls cost 39p per minute off-peak and 49p per minute at other times.



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